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Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu (from the *Dublin University Magazine* unless noted otherwise)

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A GLIMPSE OF THE SUPERNATURAL IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

A YOUNG man sat reading in the deep embrasure of a window in B—— College, his head supported on his hands as he bent with intense earnestness over a large folio which lay before him. Evening was closing in—the evening of a dull November day, and the words were gradually becoming indistinct on the pages of his book, when suddenly he looked up. It was not, however, the waning light which attracted his attention, but the sound of a rapid step ascending the stairs leading to his room. He looked eagerly towards the door, his eyes brightening, and his face, which, though thin and pale, was glorified by the spiritual beauty of intellect, flushing with sudden excitement.

In a moment there was a sharp, quick knock at the door. An answer as rapid—"Come in," and the visitor entered.

"I thought I knew your step, Seymour. Is it possible! How glad I am to see you."

"How are you, old fellow?—all right, I hope?" And they shook hands warmly.

The new comer was a tall, fine-looking man, several years older than his friend, and evidently very different both as to *morale* and to *physique*—he was strong, broad-chested, and muscular; his features, which were handsome, though somewhat too large, were relieved by his thick brown beard and moustache, and he had just the face and figure calculated to win admiration from the generality of persons.

Those, however, who looked deeper into this fine mould of living clay, could have told at once that the man was governed by the animal nature, rather than by the subtle unseen spirit. The full lip, the flashing, impatient eye, the haughty expression of face—all indicated the existence of violent passions.

Seymour could, however, look very pleasant when he smiled, as he did now most cordially on the young man before him.

"Well, Thorold," he said, "you little thought to see me here to-night."

"I should think not, indeed. Why, I imagined you held in enchantment in a certain castle in Yorkshire, with neither the will nor the power to leave it. Is it not true, then, that you are to be married next week?"

"Quite true. And I only wish it were to be to-morrow."

"Then you have merely come to take leave of your old haunts, and of the *liberam juventatem.*"

"Just so," said the other, shortly, as if he did not care to have his motives inquired into.

"Well, come and sit down," said Thorold, drawing forward his easy chair, "it is inconceivably jolly to have you here."

Seymour threw himself into the chair, and seemed for a moment so deeply preoccupied by his own thoughts, that he did not hear Thorold's next remark. Then starting, he said—

"I beg your pardon; what did you say?"

"Only that I wish you had let me know you were coming."

"I only decided to come five minutes before I got into the train, so I could not; but why do you wish it?"

"Because then I might have had some of our fellows here to meet you. There are so many who would be glad to see you again."

"Spare me that, Thorold!" exclaimed Seymour, hastily. "Remember, while I am here, I wish to see no one but yourself."

Thorold looked surprised, but he remained silent, quietly scanning the countenance of his friend.

"You look more than two years older since we last met. What have you been doing to yourself to get such a care-worn expression?"

"Is it only two years since I was here?" said Seymour, evading his friend's question.

"Yes, don't you remember. I was keeping my first term as freshman when you left college in consequence of your brother's death. It would have been your last term anyhow."

"Ah, I remember. And I can see how you have been spending your time since," said Seymour, pointing to the open books on the window-seat. "Reading yourself to death, as I always thought you would."

"Not I. I shall do myself no harm. Only this is my last term, you know, and I am going in for honours."

"I understand it all," said Seymour. Then burying his face in his hands, he exclaimed, "would to heaven that my university career had been such as yours!"

Thorold made no answer. George Seymour was his cousin. They had been fast friends from childhood, and he was much attached to him; but he was too sincere to deny that rumours had reached him respecting his friend's college life, which were any thing but creditable to him.

"Come," he said at last, anxious to change the subject, "you must tell me about this beautiful Ermance of yours. Is she really as charming as the world says?"

"Charming! She is the very essence of all that is lovely and bewitching. I would give half my life that she were less so!"

"Well done, Seymour!" said Thorold, laughing; "I can easily imagine that the prospect of matrimony must change a man greatly; but I certainly never expected to hear you give voice to such a rhapsody as that. Why on earth should you wish her to be less bewitching? Since she is certainly yours, the more charming she is, the better, I should say."

Seymour rose and walked to-and-fro through the room in evident agitation.

A somewhat awkward silence ensued, till Seymour resumed his chair and began to talk of his college days, and to inquire after the men he had known and the state of mind of the Dons on various matters of interest to undergraduates. It was evident, however, to Thorold, that he was not thinking of what he was saying, and that his mind was preoccupied with some subject of great moment to himself. A conversation of this nature soon dropped, and at last Seymour began to occupy himself in stirring up the fire with great energy. While thus engaged, he said, in a careless tone—

"By the way, Thorold, what in the world is the meaning of the cock-and-bull story of a vision—a ghost appearing near F—— Bridge, which Goldwin, of Q——n's, wrote to me about."

"Ah, that is a strange affair, of which I can give you no explanation."

"But who has seen it—what is it—*who* is it that is said to appear?" exclaimed Seymour, pouring out his questions with a strange fierceness, which startled Thorold. Seymour caught his look of astonishment. He threw the poker out of his hand impatiently."

"Such a story in the nineteenth century, is queer enough, you will admit; come, tell me what you know of it."

"I can only repeat to you what I have heard," said Thorold. "I have never gone like the rest to see this apparition, whatever it may be; my opinion is not yet formed as to the possibility of the spirits of the dead returning to earth, and I did not like to go with a sceptical mind to see what *might* be an awful reality."

"How cold it is to-night," said Seymour, shivering; "go on, Thorold."

"I will tell you, therefore, what others say; but, remember, I have seen nothing myself. I was told, that about a month ago, a labouring man was walking home late at night over F—— Bridge, when his attention was attracted by what appeared to him to be a light on the bank of the river below. Thinking, as he said himself, that some of the gentlemen were out larking, he leant on the bridge and looked steadily at it; presently he saw that what he took to be a light, was really the form of a woman standing on the bank opposite the meadow, with an infant in her arms. The night was dark, and under ordinary circumstances, he could not possibly have distinguished her at that distance; but he affirmed positively that he saw her as well as if it had been daylight, by means of a luminous atmosphere which appeared to surround her—he described her minutely—he said she seemed very young and fragile, and that her dress, which was of a light gray colour, clung to her as if it were dripping wet, while her long hair fell over her shoulders streaming with water; he said she looked exactly as if she had just risen out of the river. Why, how cold you are, George! You shiver as if you had the ague; let me put some more coal on the fire."

"No, no, go on; why do you stop? Tell me, exactly, on what part of the bank she was standing."

"A little way below the bridge, just opposite the meadow; and the man said that she was gazing intently at one particular spot on the walk, as if she saw some one standing there."

"You don't mean to say he said that?" exclaimed Seymour, starting.

"Of course he did, or I should not tell it to you."

"Did he not think it might be a girl waiting for some one,—preparing, perhaps, for a romantic walk?" said Seymour, laughing noisily.

"A romantic walk on a cold autumn night, with an infant in her arms, was not very likely. No; he said, that not for one moment did he believe it to be any thing of this earth, nor if he had, could he have continued in this belief, for as he looked, she began to move slowly;—with an almost imperceptible motion, she advanced over the water seeming to rest upon it. She held the child with one hand, but the other was raised, and with it she seemed to beckon some one to come to her, still gazing on the same spot. He watched her glide on and on, till just in that place where you know the river is very deep, below the willows, she suddenly sank. He saw her hand still beckoning above the water after she had disappeared, then it vanished also, and a faint wailing cry, in which he thought he could distinguish a name, rose from the waters, and sighed away over the trees."

"What name, what name did she say?" said Seymour, bending forward, while his hands seemed to grasp, convulsively, the arms of the chair on which he sat.

"He could not hear the name," said Thorold, who was not looking towards him; "only it seemed to be a call on some one."

"Well, and what followed? how slow, your are, Thorold."

"Why, Seymour, I never expected you to take so much interest in a ghost story!"

"Of course I am interested; it is not every day one hears such a tale—come, go on."

"There is not much more to tell; the man staggered home almost beside himself with terror, and when he told his tale, as he did at the public house that same night, the natural inference was, that he had been drunk and fancied he saw a ghost. However, in a day or two it got wind, that the very next night the same appearance was seen by several other persons, and since then it is said to have been witnessed, from time to time, by hundreds."

"But, Thorold," said Seymour, grasping his cousin's arm; "*who* is it that is supposed to appear—who—tell me?"

"Oh, as for that, those who believe it to be really a supernatural apparition, have no doubt on the subject. It is a fact, that about a year since, a young girl was found drowned in that very spot with an infant in her arms, and there were strong suspicions that there had been some foul play in the matter."

"How so—why? There could have been no ground for suspicion."

"On the contrary, there were very sufficient grounds. She was the orphan niece of a respectable farmer in the neighbourhood, and a month or two previously had become a mother, greatly to his consternation. She, however, constantly affirmed that she was secretly married, and that she was soon to leave England with her husband. On the day of her death she had gone out towards evening, taking her child with her, and looking unusually pleased and happy. She was last seen walking with a man on the meadow-walk, and next morning her dead body was found in the river; the man was never identified."

Seymour started up, and began once more to pace the room.

"Do these appearances continue?" he said.

"Yes, I heard some of our fellows proposing to go there to-night. I believe, however, that the numbers who assembled on the bridge at first have greatly diminished, because it is only occasionally that the vision is seen, and the wet weather we have had lately has deterred many from risking a disappointment."

Again Seymour walked up and down in silence; then he suddenly stopped behind his cousin's chair, where his face could not be seen.

"Tell me, Thorold," he said, "truly, honestly, what is your opinion of this marvellous story?"

"Why, to tell the truth, I have been too much occupied with my classics to give much thought to it; but my impression certainly is, that some silly fellow has taken advantage of the fact of the poor girl's violent death, to perpetrate a most unseemly hoax.

For one moment Seymour's face brightened with an expression of unspeakable hope; but the next, the gloom which had gathered on it during Thorold's story, returned with a deeper shadow than before. He went to the window and stood looking out—then he turned and said, in a tone of affected carelessness —

"I say, Thorold, let us go out and take a walk."

"Out, on this dismal evening, my dear fellow, what fancy has possessed you?' Why, you were shivering with cold just now."

"Yes, and you have made such a roasting fire, that I cannot stay in the room." Then, as if ashamed of his irritability, he added, "No; the fact is, I have taken a great desire to go and see this appearance, whatever it is, and you must come with me. The evening is lost for your work now, you know," he added, seeing that his cousin hesitated.

"It was not that which made me pause," said Thorold; "but after all I do not object to go; the very fact of having told you the story has made me feel anxious to solve the problem for myself." And in another moment the cousins, arm in arm, had crossed the quadrangle, and were out into the street.

There had been clouds and gloom in the sad autumn sky all day, and now as the twilight fell, dark masses of vapour swept towards the western horizon, like strange weird shapes in trailing funereal garments, and grouped themselves round the death-bed of the expiring light—while the deepening shadows stole down and crept stealthily over the fair green meadows and the tranquil river that lie round the grand old city of O——, till they gathered dark as the grave beneath the massive walls and sombre gateways of its time-worn colleges.

One last gleam of day there was—faint and sweet as the smile of a dying saint—that flashed from the setting sun as he sunk to rest, and lit up every tower and spire of the noble buildings with a golden transitory light. It vanished away, and as it faded, a sighing wind rose from the river and passed through the shuddering trees with a low wailing sound that was strangely mournful.

Both young men seemed to feel the influence of this scene, and they walked on in perfect silence. It was quite dark by the time they reached the bridge, where a few persons were assembled, gazing down into the river.

The cousins stopped close to an old man in the dress of a fisherman, who was leaning on the stone balustrade. He touched his hat to Thorold, who recognised him at once, as he had often used his boat on the river.

"So, David, you are here too, are you? Have you come to see the ghost?" said Thorold, lightly.

The old man frowned; then took his pipe from his mouth, and said, "Sir, I aint come to laugh at it."

"Nor I. You mistake me if you think I have; unless, indeed, it be a trick of some rascally fellow, which I quite believe it is."

"So did Ned Cowley," said the fisherman, deliberately; "and he took a gun and fired a shot at her—worse luck—and it passed through her as if she were made of air; but Ned, he fell down in a fit, and has never been hisself since; he lies in his bed raving awful. You may trust me, sir, there's more things in this world and in kingdom come, too, than you young gentlemen thinks of, with all your larning," added David, unconsciously quoting Hamlet.

"Then you believe in it, David?"

"Seeing's believing."

"What, you've seen it, then?"

"I've seen it, and I've spoken to it,"

Seymour started violently. He turned to the old man, and put a coin in his hand.

"Tell us the whole truth, word for word."

"Thank ye, kindly, sir," said David, not a little surprised; "I'll tell ye and welcome. It was one night afore ever a word had been said about it, I was a coming down the river in the boat, pulling as hard as I could to get home, for it was late, when what should I see on the bank down there but a woman standing on the edge of the water, with a babby in her arms. The moonshine looked very bright all round her, and I seed her quite plain. She seemed all wet and sorrowful like, and thinks I, its some poor creature tramping into the town, and she dunno how to get across, so I lies on my oars, and I says, says I, 'Ma'am, was you wanting to get across? I'll give ye a lift and welcome;' so she never makes no answer, but moves forward, slow like and soft, so as I never knew a mortal woman walk, and afore I knew where I was, she was into the boat and sitting down in the starn. I felt taken aback like, but I began to pull away, and by-and-by I took a look at her; but, sir, I would'nt have looked again if you had given me a hundred pounds. She was wringing wet, just as if she had been took out of the river, and her hair was dripping down all round her—and her face—oh, sir, her face was for all the world as white and stark as our Biddy's when she lay in her coffin—and her eyes, they was a staring past me on to the meadow-walk there, and they was the eyes of a dead woman, as sure as I am a Christian! I was all of a tremble, and I couldn't see what I was doing, so that one of the oars got wrong, and when we came to the deep water, I had to stop to put it right; and, sir, what I'm telling you's nothing but the livin' truth, when I looked up from sorting the oar, she was gone! There was only my old red handkerchief lying in the starn where I saw her sitting a moment afore, and neither sign nor token of her in the boat or in the river either, only a cry from the water—may I never hear such a sound again—a fearful cry, shrieking out a name—the name of"——

"Thorold, I can stand this frightful cold no longer," suddenly gasped out Seymour; "come away, come quick, I will not stay another moment—what are you waiting for?" And he tried with all his strength to drag his cousin from the spot. Thorold somewhat angrily resisted.

"Leave me alone, Seymour; I want to hear the end of David's story. Don't interrupt the old man so; it is rude."

Seymour stamped on the ground with impatience, and uttered an exclamation. He grew more calm, however, as the old man said—

"There aint no more to tell, sir. I turned as cold as a stone, and did not come to myself like till I was in bed with the childer. This is the first time I've come anigh the place since."

"Well, thank you, David, we are much obliged to you; it's a strange business altogether," said Thorold.

"Now, Seymour, I will go if you like." And they walked rapidly away.

Seymour instantly began to talk with the utmost volubility, apparently quite unconscious that his sentences, which bore no reference to the account they had just heard, were incoherent and scarcely intelligible.

Thorold, however, was not surprised. He had thoroughly understood by this time that Seymour was in a state of intense mental disquiet, and that this condition was somehow connected with the mysterious appearance on the river.

Arrived at Thorold's rooms, Seymour sat down, and fell into a fit of abstraction, from which his cousin made no effort to rouse him, and which lasted till it was time to go to bed. Then he looked up—

"Thorold, I have rooms at the Star, but I wish you would let me stay here to-night; I can sleep in this chair by the fire quite well."

"You shall have my bed."

"I shall have nothing of the kind; if you make any such offer I leave you at once. Why can you not let me be comfortable in my own way."

"You shall do just as you please, Seymour. I wish most sincerely I could do more for your comfort than may be done by simply giving you your own way; but remember if there is *any thing* a true friend can do, you will not fail to find one in me."

He looked fixedly at his cousin as he spoke, and their eyes met. Seymour held out his hand.

"I understand you, Thorold, and I thank you." And with a simple good night they parted.

Thorold lay sleeping—the sleep of a pure heart and a good conscience—when suddenly a light flashing in his face awoke him with a start. He looked up and saw Seymour, with a candle in his hand, leaning over him.

"Thorold, forgive me for disturbing you, but I must speak to you. I can endure this no longer."

"I shall be only too thankful if you will, my dear fellow; it pains me to see the state you are in. There, sit down, and make what use of me you can."

Seymour put down the light, drew a chair close to the bed, and sat down.

"Thorold, I have come to unburden myself to you of a horrible secret, and, in so doing, to put my life in your hands."

"Where I will keep it safe at the risk of my own."

"I knew you would say that, true friend indeed! but I wish you to understand that I bind you to no promise of secresy. When you have heard the truth you shall be free to do what you please."

"Agreed. Now tell me all."

"Thorold, you have known me from childhood, and you know what my one great fault has been—a passionate, indomitable self-will, which has ever resisted all contradiction, and been ready to move heaven and earth for the attainment of its object; this has been the origin of my crime and of my misery—by this I sinned and by this I suffer. You know, also, that when I was at college I was in a very different position from that in which I now am. My two elder brothers were alive, and I was the penniless younger son of a proud family. My parents treated me, as I conceived, with great injustice. They did not choose to diminish the family estate by awarding me a suitable provision, and, therefore, they determined to expatriate me. I was to have enough to buy a sheep farm in Australia, and not one penny more—with that I was to be left to fight my way to a living as best I could.

"Just at the time when this decision had filled my whole soul with bitterness, I chanced to come across Annie Maynard, Farmer Brown's orphan niece. Poor, pretty, gentle Annie! little did she dream that I would be her deadliest enemy when she first raised her blue eyes to my face. Her girlish beauty took my fancy. It was no violent passion—she had neither mind nor education to have inspired such, but I felt for her the passing affection which every young man feels half a dozen times before he has seen that one who alone can teach him what it is to love in the true sense of the word. As usual, I saw no reason why I should not indulge my fancy. It seemed to me that Annie Maynard would be a more suitable wife for an Australian sheep-farmer than a lady, if even a lady could be found to go with me there; and the poor child loved me—she loved me with all a woman's devoted, confiding love, the more precious to me then, because I was smarting under a sense of neglect and injustice. It ended in my being secretly married to her at the Registrar's Office in this city, according to the law, but the marriage, though legal, had no blessing from the Church, and, truly, it was unblest.

"I kept it secret, because I doubted whether my father would have given me even my promised portion had he known it, and I really think I was partly induced to take the step through the wish to revenge myself for my compulsory exile by showing my family that it had led me to disgrace them by an alliance with a peasant girl.

"But a very short time elapsed, however, before I repented my rash act. The momentary fancy had passed away, and I found myself bound for life to an uneducated child for whom I felt no love. In the course of the six months which followed, my two brothers died, and I suddenly found myself no longer the sheep-farmer, but the heir and hope of our ancient family. My mother wrote to me to leave college and return home immediately; and in her letter she opened out before me a prospect of future prosperity to which, probably, I should have paid no attention at all, had it not been for the irritating sense of bondage in which I was held by my rash marriage.

"My mother had a cousin who

had been left sole heiress of a large estate in our own county. She had married a French noble and had always lived in France, though bitterly regretting her fine old castle and park, which had remained desolate ever since. She had now one child, a daughter—Ermance d'Aboville—to whom, of course, the estate would descend, and it was her great desire that the heiress should marry an Englishman and settle in her own home. Her husband was, however, equally desirous that Ermance should become the wife of a certain powerful Duc de Limours, who had expressed himself willing for the alliance—my mother was the confidant and ally of the Marquise the more readily that she was bent on securing the heiress for my eldest brother, Henry;—finally after the fashion of French matrimonial arrangements, a compromise was effected, and it was decided that Ermance should spend a summer with my mother, and she might, if she pleased, accept my brother during that time; if, however, this marriage could not be arranged, she was to return to France and become Duchesse de Limours. Just before she was expected to arrive, my brother died. My mother was too good a diplomatist to let this interfere with her scheme. Ermance and Henry had never met, so she simply substituted my name for his, and wrote to me to come at once and carry out her plans.

"Had I been free I should have utterly scouted a marriage arranged by my parents; tied for life to a peasant girl the prospect seemed very alluring, even before I knew what an ideal of all beauty and fascination was offered to me in Ermance; but when I saw her, oh! Thorold, I could have strangled myself for my insane folly.

"I was driving in an open carriage from the station on the day of my return home, when suddenly, as we drew up at the door, a face looked out at me from one of the windows. I can never describe to you its exquisite loveliness—it was the sweetest, sunniest face, full of witchery and archness, with fair, floating hair, like a golden mist around it. I had seen it—never to forget it—and the next instant it was gone.

"I hastened up to the drawing-room, where I expected to find my mother. She was not there, and I sat down to wait. The door leading into the next room was ajar, where I caught a glimpse of Amelia Hartley, a young lady who was visiting at the house.

"Presently I heard a light footstep pass into the inner room, a burst of musical laughter, and a voice like the carol of a wild singing bird—

"'Amelie, Amelie, je l'ai vu ce beau prétendant et je t'en fais cadeau, si tu as envie de te marier! Je te le cède, ma chère, volontiers. Oh! mais bien volontiers,' and the sweet, merry laugh rang out again.

"'Ermance! what a capricious child you are,' Amelia answered. 'Why should you give him up? George Seymour is very good-looking.'

"'Good-looking! he is one great brown bear,' she said, in her pretty broken English; 'par exemple! le gentil epoux qu'on me donne là!'

"'You may say what you please, Ermance, but I expect you to fall in love with him.'

"'Moi! l'ideé! I love that great rough bear! Ah! bien ce sera la semaine des deux dimanches.'

"Amelia laughed; and after talking some time in the same strain, I heard them go out together. They left me half mad with pique and annoyance, and full of a settled determination that I would have my revenge by making this contemptuous girl love me, and then revealing my marriage to her.

"I devoted myself to this effort, and you may guess the result. In a very short time I was delivered up to the most violent passion for this girl which ever man felt for woman. Oh! Thorold, who could have helped it! You can never guess the charm of her marvellous grace, her beautiful voice, her fresh, original mind. She soon began to show that she liked my society, but she was shy and timid as a wild fawn. I would coax her out to walk with me, and then, suddenly, she would fly away on her fairy feet, with steps light as falling snow. I would catch the gleam of her glorious hair through the trees, and for hours I might seek her in vain, only her sweet voice would come back at times on the wind, singing some mournful song which thrilled through my heart;

but I must not talk of her. The time came when the decision must be made. I must offer myself at once, or she would go back to France to marry a man she hated; and I felt that she must be mine, cost what it would; and, besides, she also had learned to love me, and, can you believe it, Thorold, I persuaded myself that I should now be acting dishonourably by her if I did not try to break the tie that held me bound to Annie.

"It was this vile delusion which lured me on to a depth of evil I never could have contemplated in my fiercest hours of passion.

"Our marriage was settled.

"Ermance was to return to France for a few months, where I was to accompany her on a visit to her parents, and we were to be married in the course of this present autumn, at her own castle. These arrangements have all been carried out; the wedding is fixed for next week.

"It became then, at that time, an absolute necessity that I should free myself from Annie before I left England with Ermance. I came down here the week before our departure, determined to effect this. Do not shudder at me, Thorold. I had resolved on an evil deed, it is true, but it was one of which the crime was light compared to that I actually perpetrated.

"I knew that the only evidence of my marriage with Annie was the certificate which I had left in her own possession; and my plan (sufficiently iniquitous, you will say) was to persuade her to let me destroy this proof, and consider our union null and void, on condition that I made her a large allowance for her life. I believed that money was all-powerful with persons of her station, and that the low-born girl would willingly sell her good name for an independent income; but it was not Annie alone who was to be sacrificed. She had recently become a mother; and my own child was to be involved in this cruel disgrace.

"I wrote and appointed Annie to meet me on a certain evening in the C—— meadow, and bade her bring the certificate with her. Thorold, I wish with my whole soul the railway train had crushed me to death that day instead of bringing me safely to this place.

"Annie was waiting for me on the walk by the river, with a moaning, puny infant in her arms. She had lost all her early comeliness, and was now a faded, common-looking woman. I thought of Ermance, the beautiful, and perfectly loathed her. I lost no time in making known my wishes to her. To my astonishment and rage, she utterly refused. She upbraided me in the strong language of her class, and declared she would remain a concealed wife no longer; her child should have his rights, happen what would; and she would compel me to acknowledge him.

"Thorold, I can never tell you the blind fury that filled my whole soul as she spoke. Every evil passion of my nature seemed to rise up like madness within me. This woman—this base-born woman—to come between me and the darling of my heart, the hope, the joy, the very life of my life! Ermance, my own Ermance who loved me! It was too much. I swore a terrible oath that nothing on this earth should keep me from my purpose. I grasped the girl by the arm, and tried to tear the certificate from the breast of her dress, where she had it concealed; she struggled violently, shrieking out—

"'You shall not have it, you shall not have it; I will go to our clergyman to-morrow, and give it him to keep—he will see me righted fast enough.'

"Thorold, at that moment the fierce, implacable will that drove me on, seemed to rise a very living influence within me. I felt myself grow rigid as iron. I tightened my hold of her arm till she cried out with the pain, and told her I would have that certificate at any cost. She tried angrily to shake off my hold, and said—

"'I'll die first before you have it; I will see my baby righted.'

"'Then die,' I said. The very devil himself got possession of me; with one powerful effort I flung her into the river. Far out into the deep water she fell, and sank like a stone."

Seymour stopped, buried his face in his hands, and shook from head to foot. Thorold fell back on his pillow, overpowered with horror.

"Seymour, Seymour, could you not save her?"

He lifted up his ghastly face, and looked at his cousin.

"I know not if I could—*I did not.* I stood on that spot where they say the eyes of the dead woman look, and saw her rise, her and the child—my child—once. She held up her arm, and shrieked out my name—'George! George! George Seymour, save me!' then the head fell back, the hand disappeared, the voice ceased, the waters closed over her, and I fled away from the spot a two-fold murderer!

"I must hasten to the end. You must not breathe the same air with me now one moment longer than I can help. I have lived since then a life half rapture, half agony. When with Ermance, I was in a rapture of joy; absent from her, in an agony of remorse. The agony increased as my marriage day drew nearer. Annie's last cry has mingled with every sound I have heard of late. Yesterday I received a letter from Goldwin, describing this awful appearance on the river. From the moment I read it, a conviction fell like molten lead on my soul that the spirit of my murdered wife had come to earth again, and come that I might meet her—I know not for what purpose.

"The horror with which I thought of meeting *her* dead eyes—of seeing *her* again upon the very spot where I destroyed her—was beyond the power of words to tell; and yet I felt a dreadful, mysterious fascination, which I had no power to resist, dragging me to this place. I told Ermance I must leave her for two days, and, impelled by some awful power foreign to myself, I came here with my utmost speed.

"And now, Thorold, I will not keep you another moment in the presence of a murderer, but I ask you to remember your offer of help, and to grant me one favour in this my terrible extremity. Will you?"

"I will."

"Do this then for me. To-morrow night I go to the meadow-walk to meet that apparition—to respond to her call—to fulfil the purpose for which she has come to seek me, whatever it may be; but I cannot go alone—*I am afraid.* Yes, it has come to this. I shudder with horror and fear at the very thought of seeing what that old man saw; yet I must go. Will you come with me?"

"Can you doubt it?" said Thorold.

"Then to-morrow evening meet me at the College gate; till that hour I relieve you of my presence." And before Thorold had time to stop him, he had left the room, and had rushed down stairs at a pace which rendered pursuit impossible.

* * * * *

Next evening, in the shadowy twilight, Seymour and Thorold slowly paced the walk by the river-side together.

Thorold had passed his arm through that of his cousin; for deep as was his horror of the dreadful crime he had committed, he could not help now feeling the greatest compassion for him.

Is it not, indeed, the most terrible of all the agonies which human nature can endure, to bear about the consciousness of a deadly crime, once committed, and never, never, in all the eternal ages, to be recalled? And besides, the appalling presentiment of coming evil which seemed to hang over Seymour, and the strange fascination which had drawn him to witness the sight he dreaded above all others, affected Thorold very painfully. Yet he found not a word to say, as he walked to-and-fro with his cousin, during that time of dread suspense. What consolation was it possible to offer in such a case as this?

Once only the silence was broken by Seymour muttering these words to himself, which Thorold overheard—

"No doubt, this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live."

And then silently again their terrible walk continued, within the limits of the few yards which faced the spot where the apparition appeared.

As the moments dragged heavily on, Thorold began to hope that, after all, nothing might be seen; when suddenly he was startled by Seymour letting his arm fall, and stopping short abruptly where he stood facing the river. Thorold's heart seemed to cease beating, as he followed the direction of his cousin's eyes, and saw on the opposite bank the form of a woman, with a child in her arms, emitting a strange white light, which, while it rendered the figure perfectly distinct, seemed yet to veil it in luminous vapour. Had Thorold never heard a word concerning this extraordinary appearance, he would have felt the conviction in his inmost soul that he was gazing on that which was not of this world. So entranced was he by the awful sight, that he could not withdraw his eyes from it, or even give a thought for the time to Seymour, on whom, nevertheless, he saw that the gaze of the apparition was fixed; but as he looked upon her, slowly she began to move. Breathlessly he watched her, as she advanced over the water, and the cold drops stood on his forehead, as he saw her raise her wan hand, and beckon to Seymour. Then, for the first time, he cast a hasty glance on his cousin, and a horror unspeakable gained possession of him when he saw what was taking place.

In proportion as the figure advanced over the river, Seymour proceeded with measured steps down the bank to meet it. He walked as if by a power not his own—stiff, rigid, with his arms hanging motionless at his side. His countenance was ghastly beyond description; his eye staring wide open at the apparition; his jaw fallen, and a sound like the death-rattle in his throat. Already he had reached the edge of the river—already his feet were dipping into it—when Thorold, suddenly seized by an appalling fear, rushed down the bank, and caught him by the arm.

"Seymour! Seymour!—come back, come back! What are you doing?"

Not a word did he answer; not an instant did his eyes move from the corpse-like face of the apparition. He shook off Thorold's grasp as if the fascination that drew him on had given him supernatural strength. The dead woman drew yet nearer, and her murderer plunged into the water to meet her; at the same moment she sank, but her head, and the hand, which still beckoned him on, remained above the water. A wailing, unearthly cry rose up, calling upon George to come, and with strong, powerful strokes, he swam towards her.

Thorold saw him reach the spot; he saw that white, wan arm clasped tightly round his neck. One instant the manly head, warm and glowing with life and youth, appeared touching the livid dead face of the woman, and the next both had vanished beneath the water, leaving no trace behind.

In a moment Thorold had flung himself into the river, and reached the spot; he swam round it again and again, and dived repeatedly, without the smallest success. There was nothing below or around, but the dark, chill waters. At length his strength became exhausted, and he was compelled to regain the bank, and seek assistance.

But all was in vain.

The body of George Seymour was never found, nor did the mysterious apparition ever again appear on the bank of the river.

ULTOR DE LACY.

A LEGEND OF CAPPERCULLEN.

CHAPTER I.

THE JACOBITE'S LEGACY.

In my youth I heard a great many Irish family traditions, more or less of a supernatural character, some of them very peculiar, and all, to a child at least, highly interesting. One of these I will now relate, though the translation to cold type from oral narrative, with all the aids of animated human voice and countenance, and the appropriate *mise en scene* of the old-fashioned parlour fireside and its listening circle of excited faces, and outside the wintry blast and the moan of leafless boughs, with the occasional rattle of the clumsy old window-frame behind shutter and curtain, as the blast swept by, is at best a trying one.

About midway up the romantic glen of Cappercullen, near the point where the counties of Limerick, Clare, and Tipperary converge, upon the then sequestered and forest-bound range of the Slieve-Felim hills, there stood, in the reigns of the two earliest Georges, the picturesque and massive remains of one of the finest of the Anglo-Irish castles of Munster—perhaps of Ireland.

It crowned the precipitous edge of the wooded glen, itself half-buried among the wild forest that covered that long and solitary range. There was no human habitation within a circle of many miles, except the half-dozen hovels and the small thatched chapel composing the little village of Murroe, which lay at the foot of the glen among the straggling skirts of the noble forest.

Its remoteness and difficulty of access saved it from demolition. It was worth nobody's while to pull down and remove the ponderous and clumsy oak, much less the masonry or flagged roofing of the pile. Whatever would pay the cost of removal had been long since carried away. The rest was abandoned to time—the destroyer.

The hereditary owners of this noble building and of a wide territory in the contiguous counties I have named, were English—the De Lacys—long naturalized in Ireland. They had acquired at least this portion of their estate in the reign of Henry VIII., and held it, with some vicissitudes, down to the establishment of the revolution in Ireland, when they suffered attainder, and, like other great families of that period, underwent a final eclipse.

The De Lacy of that day retired to France, and held a brief command in the Irish Brigade, interrupted by sickness. He retired, became a poor hanger-on of the Court of St. Germains, and died early in the eighteenth century—as well as I remember, 1705—leaving an only son, hardly twelve years old, called by the strange but significant name of Ultor.

At this point commences the marvellous ingredient of my tale.

When his father was dying, he had him to his bedside, with no one by except his confessor; and having told him, first, that on reaching the age of twenty-one, he was to lay claim to a certain small estate in the county of Clare, in Ireland, in right of his mother—the title-deeds of which he gave him—and next, having enjoined him not to marry before the age of thirty, on the ground that earlier marriages destroyed the spirit and the power of enterprise, and would incapacitate him from the accomplishment of his destiny—the restoration of his family—he then went on to open to the child a matter which so terrified him that he cried lamentably, trembling all over, clinging to the priest's gown with one hand and to his father's cold wrist with the other, and imploring him, with screams of horror, to desist from his communication.

But the priest, impressed, no doubt, himself, with its necessity, compelled him to listen. And then his father showed him a small picture, from which also the child turned with shrieks, until similarly constrained to look. They did not let him go until he had carefully conned the features, and was able to tell them, from memory, the colour of the eyes and hair, and the fashion and hues of the dress. Then his father gave him a black box containing this portrait, which was a full-length miniature, about nine inches long, painted very finely in oils, as smooth as enamel, and folded above it a sheet of paper, written over in a careful and very legible hand.

The deeds and this black box constituted the most important legacy bequeathed to his only child by the ruined Jacobite, and he deposited them in the hands of the priest, in trust, till his boy, Ultor, should have attained to an age to understand their value, and to keep them securely.

When this scene was ended, the dying exile's mind, I suppose, was relieved, for he spoke cheerily, and said he believed he would recover; and they soothed the crying child, and his father kissed him, and gave him a little silver coin to buy fruit with; and so they sent him off with another boy for a walk, and when he came back his father was dead.

He remained in France under the care of this ecclesiastic until he had attained the age of twenty-one, when he repaired to Ireland, and his title being unaffected by his father's attainder, he easily made good his claim to the small estate in the county of Clare.

There he settled, making a dismal and solitary tour now and then of the vast territories which had once been his father's, and nursing those gloomy and impatient thoughts which befitted the enterprises to which he was devoted.

Occasionally he visited Paris, that common centre of English, Irish, and Scottish disaffection; and there, when a little past thirty, he married the daughter of another ruined Irish house. His bride returned with him to the melancholy seclusion of their Munster residence, where she bore him in succession two daughters—Alice, the elder, dark-eyed and dark-haired, grave and sensible—Una, four years younger, with large blue eyes and long and beautiful golden hair.

Their poor mother was, I believe, naturally a light-hearted, sociable, high-spirited little creature; and her gay and childish nature pined in the isolation and gloom of her lot. At all events she died young, and the children were left to the sole care of their melancholy and embittered father. In process of time the girls grew up, tradition says, beautiful. The elder was designed for a convent, the younger her father hoped to mate as nobly as her high blood and splendid beauty seemed to promise, if only the great game on which he had resolved to stake all succeeded.

CHAPTER II.

THE FAIRIES IN THE CASTLE.

THE Rebellion of '45 came, and Ultor de Lacy was one of the few Irishmen implicated treasonably in that daring and romantic insurrection. Of course there were warrants out against him, but he was not to be found. The young ladies, indeed, remained as heretofore in their father's lonely house in Clare; but whether he had crossed the water or was still in Ireland was for some time unknown, even to them. In due course he was attainted, and his little estate forfeited. It was a miserable catastrophe—a tremendous and beggarly waking up from a life-long dream of returning principality.

In due course the officers of the crown came down to take possession, and it behoved the young ladies to flit. Happily for them the ecclesiastic I have mentioned was not quite so confident as their father, of his winning back the magnificent patrimony of his ancestors; and by his advice the daughters had been secured £20 a year each, under the marriage settlement of their parents, which was all that stood between this proud house and literal destitution.

Late one evening, as some little boys from the village were returning from a ramble through the dark and devious glen of Cappercullen, with their pockets laden with nuts and "frahans," to their amazement and even terror they saw a light streaming redly from the narrow window of one of the towers overhanging the precipice among the ivy and the lofty branches, across the glen, already dim in the shadows of deepening night.

"Look—look—look—'tis the Phooka's tower!" was the general cry, in the vernacular Irish, and a universal scamper commenced.

The bed of the glen, strewn with great fragments of rock, among which rose the tall stems of ancient trees, and overgrown with a tangled copse, was at the best no favourable ground for a run. Now it was dark; and terrible work breaking through brambles and hazels, and tumbling over rocks. Little Shaeen Mull Ryan, the last of the panic rout, screaming to his mates to wait for him—saw a whitish figure emerge from the thicket at the base of the stone flight of steps that descended the side of the glen, close by the castle-wall, intercepting his flight, and a discordant male voice shrieked—

"I have you!"

At the same time the boy, with a cry of terror, tripped and tumbled; and felt himself roughly caught by the arm, and hauled to his feet with a shake.

A wild yell from the child, and a volley of terror and entreaty followed.

"Who is it, Larry; what's the matter?" cried a voice, high in air, from the turret window. The words floated down through the trees, clear and sweet as the low notes of a flute.

"Only a child, my lady; a boy."

"Is he hurt?"

"Are you hurted?" demanded the whitish man, who held him fast, and repeated the question in Irish; but the child only kept blubbering and crying for mercy, with his hands clasped, and trying to drop on his knees.

Larry's strong old hand held him up. He *was* hurt, and bleeding from over his eye.

"Just a trifle hurted, my lady!"

"Bring him up here."

Shaeen Mull Ryan gave himself over. He was among "the good people," who he knew would keep him prisoner for ever and a day. There was no good in resisting. He grew bewildered, and yielded himself passively to his fate, and emerged from the glen on the platform above; his captor's knotted old hand still on his arm, and looked round on the tall mysterious trees, and the gray front of the castle, revealed in the imperfect moonlight, as upon the scenery of a dream.

The old man who, with thin wiry legs, walked by his side, in a dingy white coat, and blue facings, and great pewter buttons, with his silver gray hair escaping from under his battered three-cocked hat; and his shrewd puckered resolute face, in which the boy could read no promise of sympathy, showing so white and phantom-like in the moonlight, was, as he thought, the incarnate ideal of a fairy.

This figure led him in silence under the great arched gateway, and across the grass-grown court, to the door in the far angle of the building; and so, in the dark, round and round, up a stone screw stair, and with a short turn into a large room, with a fire of turf and wood, burning on its long unused hearth, over which hung a pot, and about it an old woman with a great wooden spoon was busy. An iron candlestick supported their solitary candle; and about the floor of the room, as well as on the table and chairs, lay a litter of all sorts of things; piles of old faded hangings, boxes, trunks, clothes, pewter plates, and cups; and I know not what more.

But what instantly engaged the fearful gaze of the boy were the figures of two ladies; red drugget cloaks they had on, like the peasant girls of Munster and Connaught, and the rest of their dress was pretty much in keeping. But they had the grand air, the refined expression and beauty, and above all, the serene air of command that belong to people of a higher rank.

The elder, with black hair and full brown eyes, sat writing at the deal table on which the candle stood, and raised her dark gaze to the boy as he came in. The other, with her hood thrown back, beautiful and riant, with a flood of wavy golden hair, and great blue eyes, and with something kind, and arch, and strange in her countenance, struck him as the most wonderful beauty he could have imagined.

They questioned the man in a language strange to the child. It was not English, for he had a smattering of that, and the man's story seemed to amuse them. The two young ladies exchanged a glance, and smiled mysteriously. He was more convinced than ever that he was among the good people. The younger stepped gaily forward and said—

"Do you know who *I* am, my little man? Well, I'm the fairy Una, and this is my palace; and that fairy you see there (pointing to the dark lady, who was looking out something in a box), is my sister and family physician, the Lady Graveairs; and these (glancing at the old man and woman), are some of my courtiers; and I'm considering now what I shall do with *you*, whether I shall send you to-night to Lough Guir, riding on a rush, to make my compliments to the Earl of Desmond in his enchanted castle; or straight to your bed, two thousand miles under ground, among the gnomes; or to prison in that little corner of the moon you see through the window—with the man-in-the-moon for your gaoler, for thrice three hundred years and a day! There, don't cry. You only see how serious a thing it is for you, little boys, to come so near my castle. Now, for this once, I'll let you go. But, henceforward, any boys I, or my people, may find within half a mile round my castle, shall belong to me for life, and never behold their home or their people more."

And she sang a little air and chased mystically half a dozen steps before him, holding out her cloak with her pretty fingers, and courtesying very low, to his indescribable alarm.

Then, with a little laugh, she said—

"My little man, we must mend your head."

And so they washed his scratch, and the elder one applied a plaister to it. And she of the great blue eyes took out of her pocket a little French box of bon-bons and emptied it into his hand, and she said—

"You need not be afraid to eat these—they are very good—and I'll send my fairy, Blanc-et-bleu, to set you free. Take him (she addressed Larry), and let him go, with a solemn charge."

The elder, with a grave and affectionate smile, said, looking on the fairy—

"Brave, dear, wild, Una! nothing can ever quell your gaiety of heart."

And Una kissed her merrily on the cheek.

So the oak door of the room again opened, and Shaeen, with his conductor, descended the stair. He walked with the scared boy in grim silence near half way down the wild hill-side toward Murroe, and then he stopped, and said in Irish—

"You never saw the fairies before, my fine fellow, and 'tisn't often those who once set eyes on us return to tell it. Whoever comes nearer, night or day, than this stone," and he tapped it with the end of his cane, "will never see his home again, for we'll keep him till the day of judgment; good night, little gossoon—and away with you."

So these young ladies, Alice and Una, with two old servants, by their father's direction, had taken up their abode in a portion of that side of the old castle which overhung the glen; and with the furniture and hangings they had removed from their late residence, and with the aid of glass in the casements and some other indispensable repairs, and a thorough airing, they made the rooms they had selected just habitable, as a rude and temporary shelter.

CHAPTER III.

THE PRIEST'S ADVENTURES IN THE GLEN.

At first, of course, they saw or heard little of their father. In general, however, they knew that his plan was to procure some employment in France, and to remove them there. Their present strange abode was only an adventure and an episode, and they believed that any day they might receive instructions to commence their journey.

After a little while the pursuit relaxed. The government, I believe, did not care, provided he did not obtrude himself, what became of him, or where he concealed himself. At all events, the local authorities showed no disposition to hunt him down. The young ladies' charges on the little forfeited property were paid without any dispute, and no vexatious inquiries were raised as to what had become of the furniture and other personal property which had been carried away from the forfeited house.

The haunted reputation of the castle—for in those days, in matters of the marvellous, the oldest were children—secured the little family in the seclusion they coveted. Once, or sometimes twice a week, old Laurence, with a shaggy little pony, made a secret expedition to the city of Limerick, starting before dawn, and returning under cover of the night, with his purchases. There was beside an occasional sly moonlit visit from the old parish priest, and a midnight mass in the old castle for the little outlawed congregation.

As the alarm and inquiry subsided, their father made them, now and then, a brief and stealthy visit. At first these were but of a night's duration, and with great precaution; but gradually they were extended and less guarded. Still he was, as the phrase is in Munster, "on his keeping." He had firearms always by his bed, and had arranged places of concealment in the castle in the event of a surprise. But no attempt nor any disposition to molest him appearing, he grew more at ease, if not more cheerful.

It came, at last, that he would sometimes stay so long as two whole months at a time, and then depart as suddenly and mysteriously as he came. I suppose he had always some promising plot on hand, and his head full of ingenious treason, and lived on the sickly and exciting dietary of hope deferred.

Was there a poetical justice in this, that the little *manege* thus secretly established, in the solitary and timeworn pile, should have themselves experienced, but from causes not so easily explicable, those very supernatural perturbations which they had themselves essayed to inspire?

The interruption of the old priest's secret visits was the earliest consequence of the mysterious interference which now began to display itself. One night, having left his cob in care of his old sacristan in the little village, he trudged on foot along the winding pathway, among the gray rocks and ferns that threaded the glen, intending a ghostly visit to the fair recluses of the castle, and he lost his way in this strange fashion.

There was moonlight, indeed, but it was little more than quarter-moon, and a long train of funereal clouds were sailing slowly across the sky—so that, faint and wan as it was, the light seldom shone full out, and was often hidden for a minute or two altogether. When he reached the point in the glen where the castle-stairs were wont to be, he could see nothing of them, and above, no trace of the castle-towers. So, puzzled somewhat, he pursued his way up the ravine, wondering how his walk had become so unusually protracted and fatiguing.

At last, sure enough, he saw the castle as plain as could be, and a lonely streak of candlelight issuing from the tower, just as usual, when his visit was expected. But he could not find the stair; and had to clamber among the rocks and copse-wood the best way he could. But when he emerged at top, there was nothing but the bare heath. Then the clouds stole over the moon again, and he moved along with hesitation and difficulty, and once more he saw the outline of the castle against the sky, quite sharp and clear. But this time it proved to be a great battlemented mass of cloud on the horizon. In a few minutes more he was quite close, all of a sudden, to the great front, rising gray and dim in the feeble light, and not till he could have struck it with his good oak "wattle" did he discover it to be only one of those wild, gray frontages of living rock that rise here and there in picturesque tiers along the slopes of those solitary mountains. And so, till dawn, pursuing this mirage of the castle, through pools and among ravines, he wore out a night of miserable misadventure and fatigue.

Another night, riding up the glen, so far as the level way at bottom would allow, and intending to make his nag fast at his customary tree, he hears on a sudden a horrid shriek at top of the steep rocks above his head, and something—a gigantic human form, it seemed—came tumbling and bounding headlong down through the rocks, and fell with a fearful impetus just before his horse's hoofs and there lay like a huge palpitating carcass. The horse was scared, as, indeed, was his rider, too, and more so when this apparently lifeless thing sprang up to his legs, and throwing his arms apart to bar their further progress, advanced his white and gigantic face towards them. Then the horse started about, with a snort of terror, nearly unseating the priest, and broke away into a furious and uncontrollable gallop.

I need not recount all the strange and various misadventures which the honest priest sustained in his endeavours to visit the castle and its isolated tenants. They were enough to wear out his resolution, and frighten him into submission. And so at last these spiritual visits quite ceased; and fearing to awaken inquiry and suspicion, he thought it only prudent to abstain from attempting them in the daytime.

So the young ladies of the castle were more alone than ever. Their father, whose visits were frequently of long duration, had of late ceased altogether to speak of their contemplated departure for France, grew angry at any allusion to it, and they feared, had abandoned the plan altogether.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LIGHT IN THE BELL TOWER.

SHORTLY after the discontinuance of the priest's visits, old Laurence, one night, to his surprise, saw light issuing from a window in the Bell tower. It was at first only a tremulous red ray, visible only for a few minutes, and which seemed to pass from the room, through whose window it escaped upon the courtyard of the castle, and so to lose itself. This tower and casement were in the angle of the building, exactly confronting that in which the little outlawed family had taken up their quarters.

The whole family were troubled at the appearance of this dull red ray from the chamber in the Bell Tower. Nobody knew what to make of it. But Laurence, who had campaigned in Italy with his old master, the young ladies' grandfather—"the heavens be his bed this night!"—was resolved to see it out, and took his great horse-pistols with him, and ascended to the corridor leading to the tower. But his search was vain.

This light left a sense of great uneasiness among the inmates, and most certainly it was not pleasant to suspect the establishment of an independent and possibly dangerous lodger or even colony, within the walls of the same old building.

The light very soon appeared again, steadier and somewhat brighter, in the same chamber. Again old Laurence buckled on his armour, swearing ominously to himself, and this time bent in earnest upon conflict. The young ladies watched in thrilling suspense from the great window in *their* stronghold, looking diagonally across the court. But as Laurence, who had entered the massive range of buildings opposite, might be supposed to be approaching the chamber from which this ill-omened glare proceeded, it steadily waned, finally disappearing altogether, just a few seconds before his voice was heard shouting from the arched window to know which way the light had gone.

This lighting up of the great chamber of the Bell Tower, grew at last to be of frequent and almost continual recurrence. It was, there, long ago, in times of trouble and danger, that the De Lacys of those evil days used to sit in feudal judgment upon captive adversaries, and, as tradition alleged, often gave them no more time for shrift and prayer, than it needed to mount to the battlement of the turret over-head, from which they were forthwith hung by the necks, for a caveat and admonition to all evil disposed persons viewing the same from the country beneath.

Old Laurence observed these mysterious glimmerings with an evil and an anxious eye, and many and various were the stratagems he tried, but in vain, to surprise the audacious intruders. It is, however, I believe, a fact that no phenomenon, no matter how startling at first, if prosecuted with tolerable regularity, and unattended with any new circumstances of terror, will very long continue to excite alarm or even wonder.

So the family came to acquiesce in this mysterious light. No harm accompanied it. Old Laurence, as he smoked his lonely pipe in the grass-grown courtyard, would cast a disturbed glance at it, as it softly glowed out through the darking aperture, and mutter a prayer or an oath. But he had given over the chase as a hopeless business. And Peggy Sullivan, the old dame of all work, when, by chance, for she never willingly looked toward the haunted quarter, she caught the faint reflection of its dull effulgence with the corner of her eye, would sign herself with the cross or fumble at her beads, and deeper furrows would gather in her forehead, and her face grow ashen and perturbed. And this was not mended by the levity with which the young ladies, with whom the spectre had lost his influence, familiarity, as usual, breeding contempt, had come to talk, and even to jest, about it.

CHAPTER V.

THE MAN WITH THE CLARET-MARK.

But as the former excitement flagged, old Peggy Sullivan produced a new one; for she solemnly avowed that she had seen a thin-faced man, with an ugly red mark all over the side of his cheek, looking out of the same window, just at sunset, before the young ladies returned from their evening walk.

This sounded in their ears like an old woman's dream, but still it was an excitement, jocular in the morning, and just, perhaps, a little fearful as night overspread the vast and desolate building, but still, not wholly unpleasant. This little flicker of credulity suddenly, however, blazed up into the full light of conviction.

Old Laurence, who was not given to dreaming, and had a cool, hard head, and an eye like a hawk, saw the same figure, just about the same hour, when the last level gleam of sunset was tinting the summits of the towers and the tops of the tall trees that surrounded them.

He had just entered the court from the great gate, when he heard all at once the hard peculiar twitter of alarm which sparrows make when a cat or a hawk invades their safety, rising all round from the thick ivy that overclimbed the wall on his left, and raising his eyes listlessly, he saw, with a sort of shock, a thin, ungainly man, standing with his legs crossed, in the recess of the window from which the light was wont to issue, leaning with his elbows on the stone mullion, and looking down with a sort of sickly sneer, his hollow yellow cheeks being deeply stained on one side with what is called a "claret mark."

"I have you at last, you villain!" cried Larry, in a strange rage and panic; "drop down out of that on the grass here, and give yourself up, or I'll shoot you."

The threat was backed with an oath, and he drew from his coat pocket the long holster pistol he was wont to carry, and covered his man cleverly.

"I give you while I count ten—one—two—three—four. If you draw back, I'll fire, mind; five—six—you'd better be lively—seven—eight—nine—one chance more; will you come down? Then take it—ten!"

Bang went the pistol. The sinister stranger was hardly fifteen feet removed from him, and Larry was a dead shot. But this time he made a scandalous miss, for the shot knocked a little white dust from the stone wall a full yard at one side; and the fellow never shifted his negligent posture or qualified his sardonic smile during the procedure.

Larry was mortified and angry.

"You'll not get off this time, my tulip!" he said with a grin, exchanging the smoking weapon for the loaded pistol in reserve.

"What are you pistolling, Larry?" said a familiar voice close by his elbow, and he saw his master, accompanied by a handsome young man in a cloak.

"That villain, your honour, in the window, there."

"Why there's nobody there, Larry," said De Lacy, with a laugh, though that was no common indulgence with him.

As Larry gazed, the figure somehow dissolved and broke up without receding. A hanging tuft of yellow and red ivy nodded queerly in place of the face, some broken and discoloured masonry in perspective took up the outline and colouring of the arms and figure, and two imperfect red and yellow lichen streaks carried on the curved tracing of the long spindle shanks. Larry blessed himself, and drew his hand across his damp forehead, over his bewildered eyes, and could not speak for a minute. It was all some devilish trick; he could take his oath he saw every feature in the fellow's face, the lace and buttons of his cloak and doublet, and even his long finger nails and thin yellow fingers that overhung the cross-shaft of the window, where there was now nothing but a rusty stain left.

The young gentleman who had arrived with De Lacy, staid that night and shared with great apparent relish the homely fare of the family. He was a gay and gallant Frenchman, and the beauty of the younger lady, and her pleasantry and spirit, seemed to make his hours pass but too swiftly, and the moment of parting sad.

When he had departed early in the morning, Ultor De Lacy had a long talk with his elder daughter, while the younger was busy with her early dairy task, for among their retainers this *proles generosa* reckoned a "kind" little Kerry cow.

He told her that he had visited France since he had been last at Cappercullen, and how good and gracious their sovereign had been, and how he had arranged a noble alliance for her sister Una. The young gentleman was of high blood, and though not rich, had, nevertheless, his acres and his *nom de terre*, besides a captain's rank in the army. He was, in short, the very gentleman with whom they had parted only that morning. On what special business he was now in Ireland there was no necessity that he should speak; but being here he had brought him hither to present him to his daughter, and found that the impression she had made was quite what was desirable.

"You, you know, dear Alice, are promised to a conventual life. Had it been otherwise"——

He hesitated for a moment.

"You are right, dear father," she said, kissing his hand, "I *am* so promised, and no earthly tie or allurement has power to draw me from that holy engagement."

"Well," he said, returning her caress, "I do not mean to urge you upon that point. It must not, however, be until Una's marriage has taken place. That cannot be, for many good reasons, sooner than this time twelve months; we shall then exchange this strange and barbarous abode for Paris, where are many eligible convents, in which are entertained as sisters some of the noblest ladies of France; and there, too, in Una's marriage will be continued, though not the name, at all events the blood, the lineage, and the title which, so sure as justice ultimately governs the course of human events, will be again established, powerful and honoured in this country, the scene of their ancient glory and transitory misfortunes. Meanwhile, we must not mention this engagement to Una. Here she runs no risk of being sought or won; but the mere knowledge that her hand was absolutely pledged, might excite a capricious opposition and repining such as neither I nor you would like to see; therefore be secret."

The same evening he took Alice with him for a ramble round the castle wall, while they talked of grave matters, and he as usual allowed her a dim and doubtful view of some of those cloud-built castles in which he habitually dwelt, and among which his jaded hopes revived.

They were walking upon a pleasant short sward of darkest green, on one side overhung by the gray castle walls, and on the other by the forest trees that here and there closely approached it, when precisely as they turned the angle of the Bell tower, they were encountered by a person walking directly towards them. The sight of a stranger, with the exception of the one visiter introduced by her father, was in this place so absolutely unprecedented, that Alice was amazed and affrighted to such a degree that for a moment she stood stock-still.

But there was more in this apparition to excite unpleasant emotions, than the mere circumstance of its unexpectedness. The figure was very strange, being that of a tall, lean, ungainly man, dressed in a dingy suit, somewhat of a Spanish fashion, with a brown laced cloak and faded red stockings. He had long lank legs, long arms, hands, and fingers, and a very long, sickly face, with a drooping nose and a sly, sarcastic leer, and a great purplish stain overspreading more than half of one cheek.

As he strode past, he touched his cap with his thin, discoloured fingers, and an ugly side glance, and disappeared round the corner. The eyes of father and daughter followed him in silence.

Ultor De Lacy seemed first absolutely terror-stricken, and then suddenly inflamed with ungovernable fury. He dropped his cane on the ground, drew his rapier, and, without wasting a thought on his daughter, pursued.

He just had a glimpse of the retreating figure as it disappeared round the far angle. The plume, and the lank hair, the point of the rapier-scabbard, the flutter of the skirt of the cloak, and one red stocking and heel; and this was the last he saw of him.

When Alice reached his side, his drawn sword still in his hand, he was in a state of abject agitation.

"Thank Heaven, he's gone!" she exclaimed.

"He's gone," echoed Ultor, with a strange stare.

"And you are safe," she added, clasping his hand.

He sighed a great sigh.

"And you don't think he's coming back?"

"He!—who?"

"The stranger who passed us but now. Do you know him, father?"

"Yes—and—no, child—I know him not—and yet I know him too well. Would to heaven we could leave this accursed haunt to-night. Cursed be the stupid malice that first provoked this horrible feud, which no sacrifice and misery can appease, and no exorcism can quell or even suspend. The wretch has come from afar with a sure instinct to devour my last hope—to dog us into our last retreat—and to blast with his triumph the very dust and ruins of our house. What ails that stupid priest that he has given over his visits? Are *my* children to be left without mass or confession—the sacraments which *guard* as well as save—because he once loses his way in a mist, or mistakes a streak of foam in the brook for a dead man's face? D—n him!"

"See, Alice, if he won't come," he resumed, "you must only *write* your confession to him in full—you and Una. Laurence is trusty, and will carry it—and we'll get the bishop's—or, if need be, the Pope's leave for him to give you absolution. I'll move heaven and earth, but you *shall* have the sacraments, poor children!—and see him. I've been a wild fellow in my youth, and never pretended to sanctity; but I know there's but one safe way—and—and—keep you each a bit of this—(he opened a small silver box)—about you while you stay here—fold and sew it up reverently in a bit of the old psaltery parchment, and wear it next your hearts—'tis a fragment of the consecrated wafer—and will help, with the saints' protection, to guard you from harm—and be strict in fasts, and constant in prayer—*I* can do nothing—nor devise any help. The curse has fallen, indeed, on me and mine."

And Alice saw, in silence, the tears of despair roll down his pale and agitated face.

This adventure was also a secret, and Una was to hear nothing of it.

CHAPTER VI.

VOICES.

Now Una, nobody knew why, began to lose spirit, and to grow pale. Her fun and frolic were quite gone! Even her songs ceased. She was silent with her sister, and loved solitude better. She said she was well, and quite happy, and could in no wise be got to account for the lamentable change that had stolen over her. She had grown odd too, and obstinate in trifles; and strangely reserved and cold.

Alice was very unhappy in consequence. What was the cause of this estrangement—had she offended her, and how? But Una had never before borne resentment for an hour. What could have altered her entire nature so? Could it be the shadow and chill of coming insanity?

Once or twice, when her sister urged her with tears and entreaties to disclose the secret of her changed spirits and demeanour, she seemed to listen with a sort of silent wonder and suspicion, and then she looked for a moment full upon her, and seemed on the very point of revealing all. But the earnest dilated gaze stole downward to the floor, and subsided into an odd wily smile, and she began to whisper to herself, and the smile and the whisper were both a mystery to Alice.

She and Alice slept in the same bedroom—a chamber in a projecting tower—which on their arrival, when poor Una was so merry, they had hung round with old tapestry, and decorated fantastically according to their skill and frolic. One night, as they went to bed, Una said, as if speaking to herself—

"'Tis my last night in this room—I shall sleep no more with Alice."

"And what has poor Alice done, Una, to deserve your strange unkindness?"

Una looked on her curiously and half frightened, and then the odd smile stole over her face like a gleam of moonlight.

"My poor Alice, what have you to do with it?" she whispered.

"And why do you talk of sleeping no more with me?" said Alice.

"Why? Alice dear—no why—no reason—only a knowledge that it must be so, or Una will die."

"Die, Una darling!—what can you mean?"

"Yes, sweet Alice, die, indeed. We must all die some time, you know, or—or undergo a change; and my time is near—*very* near—unless I sleep apart from you."

"Indeed, Una, sweetheart, I think you *are* ill, but not near death."

"Una knows what you think, wise Alice—but she's not mad—on the contrary, she's wiser than other folks."

"She's sadder and stranger too," said Alice, tenderly.

"Knowledge is sorrow," answered Una; and she looked across the room through her golden hair which she was combing—and through the window, beyond which lay the tops of the great trees, and the still foliage of the glen in the misty moonlight.

"'Tis enough, Alice dear; it must be so. The bed must move hence, or Una's bed will be low enough ere long. See, it shan't be far though, only into that small room."

She pointed to an inner room or closet opening from that in which they lay. The walls of the building were hugely thick, and there were double doors of oak between the chambers, and Alice thought, with a sigh, how completely separated they were going to be.

However she offered no opposition. The change was made, and the girls for the first time since childhood lay in separate chambers. A few nights afterwards Alice awoke late in the night from a dreadful dream, in which the sinister figure which she and her father had encountered in their ramble round the castle walls, bore a principal part.

When she awoke there were still in her ears the sounds which had mingled in her dream. They were the notes of a deep, ringing bass voice rising from the glen beneath the castle walls—something between humming and singing—listlessly unequal and intermittent, like the melody of a man whiling away the hours over his work. While she was wondering at this unwonted minstrelsy, there came a silence, and—could she believe her ears?—it certainly was Una's clear low contralto—softly singing a bar or two from the window. Then once more silence—and then again the strange manly voice, faintly chaunting from the leafy abyss.

With a strange wild feeling of suspicion and terror, Alice glided to the window. The moon who sees so many things, and keeps all secrets, with her cold impenetrable smile, was high in the sky. But Alice saw the red flicker of a candle from Una's window, and, she thought, the shadow of her head against the deep side wall of its recess. Then this was gone, and there were no more sights or sounds that night.

As they sate at breakfast, the small birds were singing merrily from among the sun-tipped foliage.

"I love this music," said Alice, unusually pale and sad; "it comes with the pleasant light of morning. I remember, Una, when *you* used to sing, like those gay birds, in the fresh beams of the morning; that was in the old time, when Una kept no secret from poor Alice."

"And Una knows what her sage Alice means; but there are other birds, silent all day long, and, they say, the sweetest too, that love to sing by *night* alone."

So things went on—the elder girl pained and melancholy—the younger silent, changed, and unaccountable.

A little while after this, very late one night, on awaking, Alice heard a conversation being carried on in her sister's room. There seemed to be no disguise about it. She could not distinguish the words, indeed, the walls being some six feet thick, and two great oak doors intercepting. But Una's clear voice, and the deep bell-like tones of the unknown, made up the dialogue.

Alice sprung from her bed, threw her clothes about her, and tried to enter her sister's room; but the inner door was bolted. The voices ceased to speak as she knocked, and Una opened it, and stood before her in her night-dress, candle in hand.

"Una—Una, darling, as you hope for peace, tell me who is here?" cried frightened Alice, with her trembling arms about her neck.

Una drew back, with her large, innocent blue eyes fixed full upon her.

"Come in, Alice," she said, coldly.

And in came Alice, with a fearful glance around. There was no hiding place there; a chair, a table, a little bedstead, and two or three pegs in the wall to hang clothes on; a narrow window, with two iron bars across; no hearth or chimney—nothing but bare walls.

Alice looked round in amazement, and her eyes glanced with painful inquiry into those of her sister's. Una smiled one of her peculiar sidelong smiles, and said—

"Strange dreams! I've been dreaming—so has Alice. She hears and sees Una's dreams, and wonders—and well she may."

And she kissed her sister's cheek with a cold kiss, and lay down in her little bed, her slender hand under her head, and spoke no more.

Alice, not knowing what to think, went back to hers.

About this time Ultor de Lacy returned. He heard his elder daughter's strange narrative with marked uneasiness, and his agitation seemed to grow rather than subside. He enjoined her, however, not to mention it to the old servant, nor in presence of anybody she might chance to see, but only to him and to the priest, if he could be persuaded to resume his duty and return. The trial, however, such as it was, could not endure very long; matters had turned out favourably. The union of his younger daughter might be accomplished within a few months, and in eight or nine weeks they should be on their way to Paris.

A night or two after her father's arrival, Alice, in the dead of the night, heard the well-known strange deep voice speaking softly, as it seemed, close to her own window on the outside; and Una's voice, clear and tender, spoke in answer. She hurried to her own casement, and pushed it open, kneeling in the deep embrasure, and looking with a stealthy and affrighted gaze towards her sister's window. As she crossed the floor the voices subsided, and she saw a light withdrawn from within. The moonbeams slanted bright and clear on the whole side of the castle overlooking the glen, and she plainly beheld the shadow of a man projected on the wall as on a screen.

This black shadow recalled with a horrid thrill the outline and fashion of the figure in the Spanish dress. There were the cap and mantle, the rapier, the long thin limbs and sinister angularity. It was so thrown obliquely that the hands reached to the window-sill, and the feet stretched and stretched, longer and longer as she looked, toward the ground, and disappeared in the general darkness; and the rest, with a sudden flicker, shot downwards, as shadows will on the sudden movement of a light, and was lost in one gigantic leap down the castle wall.

"I do not know whether I dream or wake when I hear and see these sights; but I will ask my father to sit up with me, and we *two* surely cannot be mistaken. May the holy saints keep and guard us!" And in her terror she buried her head under the bed-clothes, and whispered her prayers for an hour.

CHAPTER VII.

UNA'S LOVE

"I HAVE been with Father Denis," said De Lacy, next day, "and he will come here to-morrow; and, thank Heaven! you may both make your confession and hear mass, and my mind will be at rest; and you'll find poor Una happier and more like herself."

But 'tween cup and lip there's many a slip. The priest was not destined to hear poor Una's shrift. When she bid her sister good-night she looked on her with her large, cold, wild eyes, till something of her old human affections seemed to gather there, and they slowly filled with tears, which dropped one after the other on her homely dress as she gazed in her sister's face.

Alice, delighted, sprung up, and clasped her arms about her neck. "My own darling treasure, 'tis all over; you love your poor Alice again, and will be happier than ever."

But while she held her in her embrace Una's eyes were turned towards the window, and her lips apart, and Alice felt instinctively that her thoughts were already far away.

"Hark!—listen!—hush!" and Una, with her delighted gaze fixed, as if she saw far away beyond the castle wall, the trees, the glen, and the night's dark curtain, held her hand raised near her ear, and waved her head slightly in time, as it seemed, to music that reached not Alice's ear, and smiled her strange pleased smile, and then the smile slowly faded away, leaving that sly suspicious light behind it which somehow scared her sister with an uncertain sense of danger; and she sang in tones so sweet and low that it seemed but a reverie of a song, recalling, as Alice fancied, the strain to which she had just listened in that strange ecstacy, the plaintive and beautiful Irish ballad, "Shule, shule, shule, aroon," the midnight summons of the outlawed Irish soldier to his darling to follow him.

Alice had slept little the night before. She was now overpowered with fatigue; and leaving her candle burning by her bedside, she fell into a deep sleep. From this she awoke suddenly and completely, as will sometimes happen without any apparent cause, and she saw Una come into the room. She had a little purse of embroidery—her own work—in her hand; and she stole lightly to the bedside, with her peculiar oblique smile, and evidently thinking that her sister was asleep.

Alice was thrilled with a strange terror, and did not speak or move; and her sister slipped her hand softly under her bolster, and withdrew it. Then Una stood for a while by the hearth, and stretched her hand up to the mantelpiece, from which she took a little bit of chalk, and Alice thought she saw her place it in the fingers of a long yellow hand that was stealthily introduced from her own chamber-door to receive it; and Una paused in the dark recess of the door, and smiled over her shoulder toward her sister, and then glided into her room, closing the doors.

Almost freezing with terror, Alice rose and glided after her, and stood in her chamber, screaming—

"Una, Una, in heaven's name what troubles you?"

But Una seemed to have been sound asleep in her bed, and raised herself with a start, and looking upon her with a peevish surprise, said—

"What does Alice seek here?"

"You were in my room, Una dear; you seem disturbed and troubled."

"Dreams, Alice. My dreams crossing your brain; only dreams—dreams. Get you to bed, and sleep."

And to bed she went, but *not* to sleep. She lay awake more than an hour; and then Una emerged once more from her room. This time she was fully dressed, and had her cloak and thick shoes on, as their rattle on the floor plainly discovered. She had a little bundle tied up in a handkerchief in her hand, and her hood was drawn about her head; and thus equipped, as it seemed, for a journey, she came and stood at the foot of Alice's bed, and stared on her with a look so soulless and terrible that her senses almost forsook her. Then she turned and went back into her own chamber.

She may have returned; but Alice

thought not—at least she did not see her. But she lay in great excitement and perturbation; and was terrified, about an hour later, by a knock at her chamber door—not that opening into Una's room, but upon the little passage from the stone screw staircase. She sprang from her bed; but the door was secured on the inside, and she felt relieved. The knock was repeated, and she heard some one laughing softly on the outside.

The morning came at last; that dreadful night was over. But Una! Where was Una?

Alice never saw her more. On the head of her empty bed were traced in chalk the words—Ultori de Lacy, Ultor O'Donnell. And Alice found beneath her own pillow the little piece of embroidery she had seen in Una's hand. It was her little parting token, and bore the simple legend —"Una's love.!"

De Lacy's rage and horror were boundless. He charged the priest, in frantic language, with having exposed his child, by his cowardice and neglect, to the machinations of the Fiend, and raved and blasphemed like a man demented.

It is said that he procured a solemn exorcism to be performed, in the hope of disenthralling and recovering his daughter. Several times, it is alleged, she was seen by the old servants. Once on a sweet summer morning, in the window of the tower, she was perceived combing her beautiful golden tresses, and holding a little mirror in her hand; and first, when she saw herself discovered, she looked affrighted, and then smiled her slanting, cunning smile. Sometimes, too, in the glen, by moonlight, it was said, belated villagers had met her, always startled first, and then smiling, generally singing snatches of old Irish ballads, that seemed to bear a sort of dim resemblance to her melancholy fate. The apparition has long ceased. But it is said that now and again, perhaps once in two or three years, late on a summer night, you may hear—but faint and far away in the recesses of the glen—the sweet, sad notes of Una's voice, singing those plaintive melodies. This, too, of course, in time will cease, and all be forgotten.

CHAPTER VIII.

SISTER AGNES AND THE PORTRAIT.

When Ultor de Lacy died, his daughter Alice found among his effects a small box, containing a portrait such as I have described. When she looked on it, she recoiled in horror. There, in the plenitude of its sinister peculiarities, was faithfully portrayed the phantom which lived with a vivid and horrible accuracy in her remembrance. Folded in the same box was a brief narrative, stating that, "A.D. 1601, in the month of December, Walter de Lacy, of Cappercullen, made many prisoners at the ford of Ownhey, or Abington, of Irish and Spanish soldiers, flying from the great overthrow of the rebel powers at Kinsale, and among the number one Roderic O'Donnel, an arch traitor, and near kinsman to that other O'Donnell who led the rebels; who, claiming kindred through his mother to De Lacy, sued for his life with instant and miserable entreaty, and offered great ransom, but was by De Lacy, through great zeal for the queen, as some thought, cruelly put to death. When he went to the tower-top, where was the gallows, finding himself in extremity, and no hope of mercy, he swore that though he could work them no evil before his death, yet that he would devote himself thereafter to blast the greatness of the De Lacys, and never leave them till his work was done. He hath been seen often since, and always for that family perniciously, insomuch that it hath been the custom to show to young children of that lineage the picture of the said O'Donnell, in little, taken among his few valuables, to prevent their being misled by him unawares, so that he should not have his will, who by devilish wiles and hell-born cunning, hath steadfastly sought the ruin of that ancient house, and especially to leave that stemma generosum destitute of issue for the transmission of their pure blood and worshipful name."

Old Miss Croker, of Ross House, who was near seventy in the year 1821, when she related this story to me, had seen and conversed with Alice de Lacy, a professed nun, under the name of Sister Agnes, in a religious house in King-street, in Dublin, founded by the famous Duchess of Tyrconnell, and had the narrative from her own lips. I thought the tale worth preserving, and have no more to say.

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THE DEATH OF THE PRINCE CONSORT.

We have this month to record the sudden death of the Prince Consort, in the prime of manhood. Active, temperate, and healthy, no man bid fairer for length of days. The public have received the startling intelligence with consternation. Upon our beloved Queen the blow has descended with an impetus unbroken by delay and aggravated by recent sorrows. Over the whole Royal Family it has burst, like one of those tornados which, without warning or mercy, in a single hour, overcast a serene sky, and desolate the earth.

All that is supposed to make life most enjoyable, in the highest as well as in the more vulgar sense, was largely mingled in the rich chalice of his fortune. First of all blessings, he had a happy and well-ordered home—the devoted attachment of his Royal Consort—herself a noble example to the wives and mothers of England—and the love and duty of the fine and intelligent family she bore him—a home refined by elegant accomplishments, beautified by many virtues, and consecrated and made delightful by the blessed influence of religion. With these he possessed the most illustrious social position next to the Throne, and a political influence, though not strictly recognized, necessarily of the highest and most comprehensive character. And lastly, he was surrounded with those luxuries and splendours which belong to kings, and the wealth after which the world is toiling, a gift not so precious in its prerogatives as in its exemptions. His life passed by unclouded and unchilled by the passing of so much as one of those dismal cares which chequer the common lot of mankind with fears and miseries.

Such a lot approached, perhaps, as near to perfect happiness as is compatible with the condition of humanity. It had, however, this alloy:—the highest social and heraldic position was indeed conceded; but the Constitution denied a corresponding political status. To share merely in the ceremonial dignities of a court, standing always so near, and, in the relation of husband, to the impersonation of the highest political power in the empire, and yet to possess none himself—conscious at the same time of the knowledge and the capacity to exercise it, was, it is idle to deny, a mortifying position. This, indeed, was compensated, though not publicly, by the intimate confidence of his Royal Consort. The letter of the Constitution, it is true, excluded him from the potential discussion of political affairs; but when the question came at length to be raised in the public journals, the people of England refused to sanction the unnatural, if not impossible restraints, which a literal construction of constitutional law would have imposed upon the mutual confidences of man and wife. They relied upon the good sense and integrity of the Prince; they felt that Her Majesty could not practically be denied the benefit of his advice; and that his stake in the honour and prosperity of England was as vast and vital as that of any mortal could be. To give him personal access to the deliberations of the Cabinet, was, they knew, no more than conceding immediate and authentic information upon those points on which, they took it for granted, he would, in any case, be called upon to advise with her of all whose cares and secrets he was the partner. The practice, therefore, received the tacit sanction of the public, who, while they felt that if the influence were abused, the constitutional remedy lay in their own hands, could not withhold their sympathy from the generous affection of the Queen who risked her popularity in her loving anxiety to prove her reliance upon the virtue and wisdom of her husband, as well as to give him a more practical and solid status in the business and in the esteem of the nation. And, though on the part of those who took up the question on the abstract principles of English law, some momentary asperity may possibly have been carried into the controversy, yet we believe that there is not now to be found a man who would wish that generous hazard unrisked, or the remembrance of the devotion it testified denied to the desolate wife.

But the Prince Consort held a distinct and legitimate position in relation to many associations connected with literature, science, and the arts: and whenever circumstances called for his taking a public part in their proceedings, his addresses were always remarkable for a careful study of his subject, an unpretending and perspicuous diction and perfectly unaffected condensation of style, a strong common sense, and great delicacy of perception, which impressed them with a general character both of originality and ability that fully justified the value which Her Majesty was known, amidst the cares and difficulties which often beset a throne, to set upon his advice and assistance.

Her sudden and irreparable bereavement has shown the people of England how their Sovereign can bear sorrow. The high sense of duty, which is one of her many queenlike attributes, was never so conspicuous as in her fortitude—the resignation which "consents to death, but conquers agony"—in the resolution to strive to give to the public the thought, time, and labour that she owes them, adopting Bacon's maxim, "The Sovereign is the servant of his people; else he is without a calling."

It is, for the most part, vain to offer consolation in those terrible bereavements which attend our mortal lot. Mental differs from mental, as widely as physical from physical constitution. The Almighty Creator of those beautiful affections, which he directs with so sublime a tenderness, and compassionates with so wonderful a sympathy, ordains that every wounded spirit shall search out for itself the specific which soothes, though it may not heal, its lacerations. And it is one of the inexhaustible marvels of His Word that there is no direction which our sorrow can take for which there is not there provided a special comfort. Our fellow-mortals can yield us little but their sympathy. Throughout her wide dominions, from the millions over whom she rules—standing afar off, reverently—arise the loud and irrepressible sounds of honest sorrow, and sympathy, and prayer for their widowed Sovereign; and it will be something, perhaps, consolatory to the queenly nature of the royal mourner to know that there is not in her wide empire a heart that is not drawn nearer to her in love and duty in the hour of her tribulation.

BORRHOMEO THE ASTROLOGER.

A MONKISH TALE.

At the period of the famous plague of Milan in 1630, a frenzy of superstition seized upon the population high and low. Old prophecies of a diabolical visitation reserved for their city, in that particular year of grace, prepared the way for this wild panic of the imagination. When the plague broke out terror seems to have acted to a degree scarcely paralleled upon the fancy or the credulity of the people. Excitement in very many cases produced absolutely the hallucinations of madness. Persons deposed, in the most solemn and consistent terms, to having themselves witnessed diabolical processions, spoken with an awful impersonation of Satan, and been solicited amidst scenes and personages altogether supernatural, to lend their human agency to the nefarious designs of the fiend, by consenting to disseminate by certain prescribed means, the virus of the pestilence.

Some of the stories related of persons possessed by these awful fancies are in print; and by no means destitute of a certain original and romantic horror. That which I am about to tell, however, has I believe, never been printed. At all events I saw it only in MSS., sewed up in vellum, with a psaltery and half-a-dozen lives of saints, in the library of the old Dominican monastery which stands about two leagues to the north-east of the city. With your permission I am about to give you the best translation I was able to make of this short but odd story, of the truth of which, judging from the company in which I found it, the honest monks entertained no sort of doubt. You are to remember that all sorts of tales of wonder were at that time flying about and believed in Milan, and that many of these were authenticated in such a way as to leave no doubt as to the *bona fides* of those who believed themselves to have been eye-witnesses of what they told. Monks and country padres of course believed; but so did men who stood highest in the church, and who, unless fame belied them, believed little else.

In the year of our Lord, 1630, when Satan, by divine permission, appearing among us in person, afflicted our beautiful city of Milan with a pestilence unheard of in its severity, there lived in the *Strada Piana*, which has lately been pulled down, an astrologer calling himself Borrhomeo. Some say he came from Perrugia, others from Venice; I know not. He it was who first predicted, in the year of our Lord, 1628, by means of his art, that the pale comet which then appeared would speedily be followed, not by war or by famine, but by pestilence; which accordingly came to pass. Beside his skill in astrology, which was wonderful, he was profoundly versed in alchymy. He was a man great in stature, and strong, though old in years, and with a most reverent beard. But though seemingly austere in his life, it is said that he was given up, in secret, to enormous wickedness.

Having shut himself up in his house for more than a month, with his furnace and crucibles (truly he had made repeated and near approaches to the grand arcanum) he had arrived, as he supposed, at the moment of projection.

He collects the powder and tries it on molten lead; it was a failure. He was too wise to be angry; the long pursuit of his art had taught him patience. But while he is pondering in a profound and gloomy reverie, a retort, which he had forgotten in the furnace, explodes.

He sees in the smoke a pale young man, dressed in mourning, with black hair, and viewing him with a sad and reproachful countenance.

Borrhomeo who lived among chimæras, is not utterly overcome, as another man might be, and confronts him, amazed, indeed, but not terrified.

The stranger shook his head like a holy young confessor, who hears an evil shrift; and says he, rather sternly—"Borrhomeo! Beware of covetousness which is idolatry. On this sordid pursuit which you call a science, have you wasted your days on earth and your peace hereafter."

"Young man," says the alchymist, too much struck by the manner and reproof of the stranger to ask himself how he came there—"Wealth is power to do good as well as evil. To seek it is, therefore, an ambition as honourable as any other."

"We both know why you seek it, and how you would employ it," answers the young man gravely.

The old man's face flushed with anger at this rebuke, and he looked down frowningly to the table whereon lay the book of his spells. But he bethought him this must be a good spirit, and he was abashed. Nevertheless, he roused his courage, and shook his white mane back, and was on the point of answering sternly, when the young man said with a melancholy smile—

"Besides, you will never discover the grand arcanum—the elixir vitæ, or the philosopher's stone."

His words, which were as soft as snow flakes, fell like an iron mace upon the heart of the seer.

"Perhaps not," said the astrologer frigidly.

"Not perhaps," said the stranger.

"At all events, young man—for as such you appear—and I know what spirits seek who take that shape, the science has its charms for me; and when the pleasures of the young are as harmless as the amusements of the aged I'll hear you question mine."

"You know not what spirit you are of. As for me, I am contrite and humble—well I may," says the stranger faintly with a sigh. "Besides, what you have pursued in vain, and will never by your own researches find, I have discovered."

"What! the"——

"Yes, the tincture that can prolong life to virtual immortality, and the dust that can change that lead into gold; but I care for neither."

"Why, young man, if this be true," says Borrhomeo in a rapture of wonder, "you stand before me an angel of wisdom, in power and immortality like a god!"

"No," says the stranger, "a long-lived fellow, with a long purse—that's all."

"All?—every thing?" cries the old man. "Will you—*will* you"——

"Yes, sir, you shall see," says the young man in black. "Give me that crucible. It is all a matter of proportions. Water, clay, and air are the material of all the vegetable world—the flowers and forests, the wines and the fruits—the seed is both the laboratory and the chemist, and knows how, with the sun's help, to apportion and combine."

While he said this with the abstracted manner of one whose mind is mazed in a double reverie, while his hands work out some familiar problem, he tumbled over the alchymist's papers, and unstopped and stopped his bottles of crystals, precipitates, and elixirs—taking a little from this and a little from that, and throwing all into a small gold cup that stood on the table; but like a juggler, he moved those bottles so deftly, that the quick eyes and retentive soul of the old man vainly sought to catch or keep the order of the process. When he had done there was hardly a thimblefull.

"Is that it?" whispered the old man, twinkling with greedy eyes.

"No," said the stranger, with a sly smile, "there is one very simple ingredient which you have forgotten."

He took a large, flat, oval gold box, with some hair set under a crystal in the lid of it, and looking at it for a moment, he seemed to sigh. He tapped it like a snuff-box—there was within it a powder like vermilion, and on the inside of the lid, in the centre, was the small enamel portrait of a beautiful but sinister female face. The features were so very beautiful, and the expression so strangely blended with horror, that it fixed the gaze of the old man for a moment; and—was it illusion?—he thought he saw the face steadily dilating as if it would gradually fill the lid of the box, and even expand to human dimensions.

"Yes," said the stranger, as having

taken some of the red powder, he shut the cover down again with a snap, "she was beautiful, and her lineaments are still clear and bright—nothing like darkness to keep them from fading, and so the poor little miniature is again in prison;" and he dropped the box back into his pocket.

Then he took two iron ladles, and heating in the one his powder to a white heat, and bidding the alchymist melt a pellet of lead in the other, and pour it into the ladle which held the powder, there arose a beautiful purple fire in the bottom of it, with an intense fringe of green and yellow; and when it subsided there was a little nut of gold there of the bigness of the leaden pellet.

The fiery eyes of the alchymist almost leaped from their sockets into the iron cup, and he could have clasped his marvellous visitor round the knees and worshipped him.

"And now," says the stranger very gently and earnestly, "in return for satisfying your curiosity, I ask only your solemn promise to prosecute this dread science no more. Ha! you'll not give it. Take, then, my warning, and remember the wages of this knowledge is sorrow."

"But won't you tell me how to commute—and—and—you have not produced the elixir," the old man cried.

"'Tis folly—and, as I've told you, worse—a snare," answered the young man, sighing heavily. "I came not to satisfy but to rebuke your dangerous though fruitless frenzy. Besides, I hear my friend still pacing the street. Hark! he taps at the window."

Then came a sharp rattle as of a cane tapping angrily on the window.

The young man bowed, smiling sadly, and somehow got himself away, though without hurry, yet so quickly that the old man could not reach the door till after it had closed and he was gone.

"Oaf that I am!" cried the astrologer, losing patience and stamping on the ground, "how have I let him go? He hesitated—he would have yielded—his scruples, benevolent perhaps, I could have quieted—and yet in the very crisis I was tongue-tied and motionless, and let him go!"

He pushed open the little window, from which he observed the street, and thought he saw the stranger walking round the corner, conversing with a little hunchback in a red cloak, and followed by an ugly dog.

At sight of the great white head and beard, and the fierce features of the alchymist, bleared and tanned in the smoke of his furnace, people stopped and looked. So he withdrew, and in haste got him ready for the street, waiting for no refreshment, though he had fasted long; for he had the strength as well as the stature of a giant, and forth he went.

By this time the twilight had passed into night. He had his mantle about him, and his rapier and dagger—for the streets were dangerous, and a feather in his cap, and his white beard hidden behind the fold of his cloak. So he might have passed for a tall soldier of the guard.

The pestilence kept people much within doors, and the streets more solitary than was customary. He had walked through the town two hours and more, before he met with any thing to speak of. Then—lo!—on a sudden, near the Fountain of the Lion – it being then moonlight –he discovers, in a solitude, the figure of his visiter, standing with the hunchback and the dog, which he knew by its ungainly bones, and its carrying its huge head so near the ground.

So he shouts along the silent street, "Stay a moment, signor," and he mends his pace.

But they were parting company there, it seemed, and away went the deformed, with his unsightly beast at his heels, and this way came the youth in black.

So standing full in his way, and doffing his cap, and throwing back his cloak, that his snowy beard and head might appear, and the stranger recognize him when he drew nigh. He cried—

"Borrhomeo implores thee to take pity on his ignorance."

"What! still mad?" said the young man. "This man will waste the small remnant of his years in godless search after gold and immortality; better he should know all, and feel their vanity."

"Better a thousand times!" cried the old man, in ecstacy.

"There is in this city, signor, at this time, in great secrecy, the master who taught me," says the youth, "the master of all alchymists. Many centuries since he found out the elixir vitæ. From him I've learned the few secrets that I know, and without his leave I dare not impart them. If you desire it, I will bring you before him; but, once in his presence, you cannot recede, and his conditions you must accept."

"All, all, with my whole heart. But some reasonable pleasures" ——

"With your pleasures he will not interfere; he cannot change your heart," said the young man, with one of his heavy sighs; "but you know what gold is, and what the elixir is, and power and immortality are not to be had for nothing."

"Lead on, signor, I'm ready," cries the old man, whose face flushed, and his eyes burned with the fires of an evil rapture.

"Take my hand," said the young man, more stern and pale than he had yet appeared. So he did, and his conductor seized it with a cold gripe, and they walked swiftly on.

Now he led him through several streets, and on their way Borrhomeo passes his notary, and, lingering a moment, asks him whether he has a bond, signed by a certain merchant, with whom he had contracted for a loan. The notary, who was talking to another, says, suddenly, to that other—

"Per Baccho! I've just called to mind a matter that must be looked after for Signor Borrhomeo;" and he called him a nick-name, which incensed the astrologer, who struck him a lusty box upon the ear.

"There's a humming in my ear to-night," said the notary, going into his house; "I hope it is no sign of the plague."

So on they walked, side by side, till they reached the shop of a vintner of no good repute. It was well known to Borrhomeo—a house of evil resort, where the philosopher sometimes stole, disguised, by night, to be no longer a necromancer, but a man, and, so, from a man to become a beast.

They passed through the shop. The host, with a fat pale face, and a villanous smile, was drawing wine, which a handsome damsel was waiting to take away with her. He kissed her as she paid, and she gave him a cuff on his fat white chops, and laughed.

"What's become of Signor Borrhomeo," said the girl, "that he never comes here now."

"Why, here he is!" cries Borrhomeo, with a saturnine smile, and he slaps his broad palm on her shoulder.

But the girl only shrugged, with a little shiver, and said, "What a chill down my back—they're walking over my grave now."

[The Italian phrase here is very nearly equivalent].

"Why they neither hear nor see me!" said the astrologer, amazed.

They went into the inner room, where guests used to sit and drink. But the plague had stopped all that, and the room was empty.

"He's in there," said the young man; "you'll see him presently."

Borrhomeo was filled with an awful curiosity. He knew the room, he thought, well; and there never had been, he thought, a door where the young man had pointed; but there was now a drapery there like what covers a doorway, and it swelled and swayed slowly in the wind.

"Some centuries?" said the astrologer, looking on the dark drapery. "Geber, perhaps, or Alfarabi" ——

"It matters not a pin's point what his name; you'll call him 'my lord,' simply; and—observe—we alchymists are a potent order, and it behoves you to keep your word with us."

"I will be true," said Borrhomeo.

"And use the powers you gain, beneficently," repeated his guide.

"I'm but a sinner. I will strive, with only an exception, in favour of such things as make wealth and life worth having," answered the philosopher.

"See, take this, and do as I bid you," said the youth, giving him a thin round film of human skin.

[How the honest monk who wrote the tale, or even Borrhomeo himself, knew this and many other matters he describes, 'tis for him to say.]

"Breathe on it," said he.

And when he did so he made him stretch it to the size of a sheet of paper, which he did quite easily.

"Now cover your face with it as with a napkin."

So he did.

"'Twill do; give it to me. It is but a picture. See."

And it slowly shrunk until its disc was just the same as that of the lady's miniature in the lid of the box, over which he fixed it.

Borrhomeo beheld his own picture.

"Every adept has his portrait here," said the young man. "So good a likeness is always pleasant; but these have a power beside, and establish a sympathy between their originals and their possessor which secures discipline and silence."

"How does it work?" asked Borrhomeo.

"Have I not been your good angel?" said the young man, sitting before him. He extends his legs—pushing out his feet, and letting his chin sink on his chest—he fixes his eyes upon him with a horrible and sarcastic glare, and one of his feet contracts and divides into a goatish stump.

Borrhomeo would have burst into a yell, but he could not.

"It is a nightmare, is it not?" said the stranger, who seemed delighted to hold him, minute after minute, in that spell. At last the shoe and hose that seemed to have shrunk apart like burning parchment, closed over the goatish shin and hoof; and rising, he shook him by the shoulder. With a gasp, the astrologer started to his feet.

"There, I told you it was a nightmare, or—or what you please. I could not have done it but through the picture. You see how fast we have you. You must for once resemble a Christian, Borrhomeo, and with us deal truly and honestly."

"You've promised me the elixir vitæ," the old man said, fearful lest the secret should escape him.

"And you shall have it. Go, bring a cup of wine. He'll not see you, nor the wine, nor the cup."

So he brought a cup of Falernian, which he loved the best.

"There's fifty years of life for every drop," said the youth.

"Let me live a thousand years, to begin with," cries Borrhomeo.

"Beware. You'll tire of it" ——

"Nay. Give me the twenty drops."

So he took the cup, and measured the drops; and as they fell, the wine was agitated with a gentle simmer all over, and threw out ring after ring of purple, green, and gold. And Borrhomeo drank it, and sucked in the last drop in ecstacy, and cried out, blaspheming, with joy and sensual delight—

"And I'm to have this secret, too."

"This and all others, when you claim them," said the young man.

"See, 'tis time," he added.

And Borrhomeo saw that the great misshapen dog he had seen in the street, was sniffing by the stranger's feet.

When they went into the inner room there was a large table, and many men at either side; and at the head a gigantic man, with a face like the face of a beast, but the flesh was as of a man. Borrhomeo quaked in his presence.

"I am aware of what hath passed, Borrhomeo," he said. "The condition is this:—You take this vial, and with the fluid it contains and the sponge trace the letter S on every door of every church and religious house within the walls of Milan. The dog will go with you."

It was a fiend in dog's shape, says the monkish writer; and had he failed in his task would have torn him in pieces.

So Borrhomeo, that old arch-villain, undertook this office cheerfully, well knowing what its purpose was. For it was a thing notorious, that Satan was himself in a bodily, though phantasmal, shape seen before in Milan, and that he had tempted others to a like fascinorous action; but, happily for their souls, in vain. The Stygian satellites of the fiend had power to smear the door of every unconsecrated house in Milan with that pestilential virus, as, indeed, the citizens with their own eyes, when first the plague broke out, beheld upon their own doors. But they could not defile the church gates, nor the doors of the monasteries; and according to the conditions under which their infernal malice is bound, they could in nowise effect it save by the hand of one who was baptized, which, to the baleful abuse of that holy sacrament, the wretch, Borrhomeo, had been.

He did his accursed and murderous office well and fearlessly. His reward mammon and indefinite long life. The hell-dog by his side compelling him, and the belief in his invisibility making him confident withal. But therein was shown forth to all the world the craft of the fiend, and the just judgment of heaven; for he was plainly seen in the very act by the Sexton of the Church of Saint Mary of the Passion, and by the Pastor of the convent of Saint Justina of Padua, and the same officer of the Olivetans of Saint Victor. So, finding in the morning the only too plain and fatal traces of what he had been doing, with a mob at their heels, who would have had his life but for the guard, they arrested him in his house next morning, and the mob breaking in, smashed all the instruments of his infernal art, and would have burnt the house had they been allowed.

He being duly arraigned was, according to law, put to the torture, and forthwith confessed all the particulars I have related. So he was cast into a dungeon to await execution, which secretly he dreaded not, being confident in the efficacy of the elixir he had swallowed.

He was not to be put to death by decapitation. It was justly thought too honourable for so sordid a miscreant. He was sentenced to be hanged, and after hanging a day and a night he was to be laid in an open grave outside the gate on the Roman road, and there impaled, and after three days' exposure to be covered in, and so committed to the keeping of the earth, no more to groan under his living enormities.

The night before his execution, thinking deeply on the virtue of the elixir, and having assured himself, by many notable instances, which he easily brought to remembrance, that they could not deprive him, even by this severity, of his life, he lifted up his eyes and beheld the young man, in mourning suit, whose visit had been his ruin, standing near him in the cell.

This slave of Satan affected a sad countenance at first; and said he, "We are cast down, Borrhomeo, by reason of thy sentence."

"But we've cheated them," answers he, pretending, maybe, more confidence than he had; "they can't kill me."

"That's certain," rejoins the fiend.

"I shall live for a thousand years," says he.

"Ay, you must continue to live for full one thousand years; 'tis a fair term—is it not?"

"A great deal may be done in that time," says the old man, while beads of perspiration covered his puckered forehead, and he thought that, perhaps, he might cheat *him* too, and make his peace with heaven.

"They can't hang me," says Borrhomeo.

"Oh! yes, they will certainly hang you; but, then, you'll live through it."

"Ay, the elixir," cried the prisoner.

"Thus stands the case: when an ordinary man is hanged he dies outright; but you can't die."

"No—ha, ha!—I can't die!"

"Therefore, when you are hanged, you feel, think, hear, and soforth during the process."

"St. Anthony! But then 'tis only an hour—one hour of agony—and it ends."

"You are to hang for a whole day and night," continued the fiend; "but that don't signify. Then when they take you down, you continue to feel, hear, think, and, if they leave your eyes open, to see, just as usual."

"Why, yes, certainly, I'm alive," cries Borrhomeo.

"Yes, alive, quite alive, although you appear to be dead," says the dæmon with a smile.

"Ay; but what's the best moment to make my escape?" says Borrhomeo.

"Escape! why, you *have* escaped. They can't kill you. No one can kill you, until your time is out. Then you know they lay you in an open grave and impale you."

"What! ah, ha!" roared the old sinner, "you are jesting."

"Hush! depend upon it they will go through with it."

The old man shook in every joint.

"Then, after three days and nights, they bury you," said his visitor.

"I'll lose my life, or I'll break from them!" shouts the gigantic astrologer.

"But you can't lose your life, and you can't break from them," says the fiend, softly.

"Why not? Oh! blessed saints! I'm stronger than you think."

"Ay, muscle, bones—you are an old giant!"

"Surely," cries the old man, "and the terror of a dead man rising; ha! don't you see? They fly before me, and so I escape."

"But you can't rise."

"Say—say in heaven's name what you mean," thundered old Borrhomeo.

"Do you remember, signor, that nightmare, as we jocularly called it, at the sign of the 'Red Hat'?"

"Yes."

"Well, a man who having swallowed the elixir vitæ, suffers that sort of shock which in other mortals is a violent death, is afflicted during the remainder of his period of life, whether he be decapitated, or dismembered, or is laid unmutilated in the grave, with that sort of catalepsy, which you experienced for a minute—a catalepsy that does not relax or intermit. For that reason you ought to have carefully avoided this predicament."

"'Tis a lie," roared the old man, and he ground his teeth, *that's* not living."

"You'll find, upon my honour, that it *is* living," answered the fiend, with a gentle smile, and withdrawing from the cell.

Borrhomeo told all this to a priest, not under seal of confession, but to induce him to plead for his life. But the good man seeing he had already made himself the liegeman and accomplice of Satan, refused. Nor would his intercession have prevailed in any wise.

So Borrhomeo was hanged, impaled, and buried, according to his sentence; and it came to pass that fourteen years afterwards, that grave was opened in making a great drain from the group of houses thereby, and Borrhomeo was found just as he was laid therein, in no wise decayed, but fresh and sound, which, indeed, showed that there did remain in him that sort of life which was supposed to ward off the common consequences of death.

So he was thrown into a great pit, and with many curses, covered in with stones and earth, where his stupendous punishment proceeds.

Get thee hence, Satan.

SOUL AND DEITY.

(FROM METESTATIO).

L'onda dal mar divisa
Bagna la valle e'l moute, &c.

As waters parted from the ocean
Bathe the valley, bathe the mountain—
Here sailing heaven in vaporous motion,
Here sparkling in the marble fountain,
Lastly to the sea return—
To the sea on whose bright breast
They have gained their liquid life,
Where once more their wandering strife
Ends in rest:—
So the Soul that in Time's sky
Moves awhile
In gloom and smile,
Ends, where it rose, in Deity.

Thomas Irwin.

THE LADY OF LA GARAYE.*

It is now-a-days not merely pleasant, but a positive relief to meet with a writer of poetry, who imitates no one, and would have been precisely what she is, had Tennyson never written a line. The individuality of this poem is perfect. There is no obtrusion of self, and yet you cannot forget who the relater of the story is. The fusion of the writer in the heroine is quite unconscious, and yet it imparts a singular sense of truth and depth unattainable without it. Where, in this true story of La Garaye, Mrs. Norton deals with feelings, she is declaratory rather than descriptive, and opens out a picture of womanly sorrow, and of the transition or rather sublimation of character and affections, singular in its tender grace and colouring, and quite marvellous in the pre-Raphaelite pencilling of its details.

There is nowhere a more delicate and touching analysis of female sorrow and of that feminine jealousy, not vulgar doubt and passion, no reproachful suspicion of the beloved one's faith and love, but the untold forebodings of a mind darkened by the melancholy distrust of the old charm in which that allegiance was made lighter than liberty itself, and needed not the sad auxiliary of pity.

The dedication to the Marquis of Lansdowne betrays the saddened and retrospective feeling that pervades the poem, and, rightly read, supplies a key to much of its beauty and melancholy.

"The joy that budded on my own youth's bloom,
When life wore still a glory and a gloss,
Is hidden from me in the silent tomb;
Smiting with premature unnatural loss,

So that my very soul is wrung with pain,
Meeting old friends whom most I love to see.
Where are the younger lives, since these remain?
I weep the eyes that should have wept for me!

But all the more I cling to those who speak
Like thee, in tones unaltered by my change;
Greeting my saddened glance, and faded cheek
With the same welcome that seemed sweet and strange

In early days: when, I of gifts made proud,
That could the notice of such men beguile,
Stood listening to thee in some brilliant crowd,
With the warm triumph of a youthful smile.

Oh! little now remains of all that was!
Even for this gift of linking measured words,
My heart oft questions, with discouraged pause,
Does music linger in the slackening chords?

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* "The Lady of La Garaye." By the Hon. Mrs. Norton. Macmillan and Co., London.

Yet, friend, I feel not that all power is fled,
While offering to thee, for the kindly years,
The intangible gift of thought, whose silver thread
Heaven keeps untarnished by our bitterest tears.

So, in the brooding calm that follows woe,
This tale of La Garaye I fain would tell,
As, when some earthly storm hath ceased to blow;
And the huge mounting sea hath ceased to swell;

After the maddening wrecking and the roar,
The wild high dash, the moaning sad retreat,
Some cold slow wave creeps faintly to the shore,
And leaves a white shell at the gazer's feet."

The "prologue" is in the same spirit. Ruins and their associations, a picture and a moral. The picture so breezy and fragrant and rich withal, with its insect hum and ivy rustle, and its dim and holy isolation, the moral suggested rather than spoken — "Vanity of vanities"—heard clear and plaintive (no scoff or cynicism here!) "like music on the waters."

"Ruins! a charm is in the word,
It makes us smile, it makes us sigh,
'Tis like the note of some spring bird
Recalling other springs gone by,
And other woodnotes which we heard
With some sweet face in some green lane,
And never can so hear again!
Ruins! they were not desolate
To us, the ruins we remember:
Early we came and lingered late,
Through bright July, or rich September;
With young companions wild with glee,
We feasted 'neath some spreading tree—
And looked into their laughing eyes,
And mocked the echo for replies.
Oh! eyes—and smiles—and days of yore,
Can nothing your delight restore?
Return!
Return? in vain we listen;
Those voices have been lost to earth!
Our hearts may throb, our eyes may glisten,
They'll call no more in love or mirth.
For, like a child sent out to play,
Our youth hath had its holiday,
And silence deepens where we stand
Lone as in some foreign land,
Where our language is not spoken,
And none know our hearts are broken.
Ruins! how we loved them then!
How we loved the haunted glen
Which grey towers overlook,
Mirrored in the glassy brook.
How we dreamed, and how we guessed,
Looking up with earnest glances,
Where the black crow built its nest,
And we built our wild romances;
Tracing in the crumbled dwelling,
Bygone tales of no one's telling!"

. . . .

"Now a song, high up and clear,
Like a lark's, enchants the ear;
Or some happy face looks down,
Looking, oh! so fresh and fair,
Wearing youth's most glorious crown,
One rich braid of golden hair.
Or two hearts that wildly beat,
And two pair of eager feet,
Linger in the turret's bend,
As they side by side ascend,
For the momentary bliss
Of a lover's stolen kiss;
And emerge into the shining
Of that summer day's declining,
Disengaging clasping hands
As they meet their comrade bands,
With the smile that lately hovered,
(Making lips and eyes so bright,)
And the blush which darkness covered
Mantling still in rosy light!"

The story is literally true. Its incidents are few, but most affecting; and Mrs. Norton has, with a reverence for its sad reality, in which taste and feeling will equally sympathize, refused to tamper with its delicate and simple outline. She has interpolated and omitted nothing; but the mellow and tender lights in which it is exhibited are all her own. Not only the material but the mental world of its chief actors returns at her musical summons to life, motion, and colour. The roofless chateau, the tangled brake, and desolated gardens, the void and silent courts, and dismantled gate-piers, forget the ruin and neglect of a hundred years, and rise and expand in the music and glories of a by-gone spring. With a power much rarer, and, to an intelligent reader, far more striking, she revives, perhaps creates, the feelings whose exquisite colouring and gradations constitute the chief and peculiar charm of the poem.

The same spirit of reality, which is one striking characteristic of this graceful volume, is discernible in the sketches from Mrs. Norton's own hand, which accompany its pages. The two views—one of the ruins of the chateau, the other of the tall ivy-mantled piers of its gateway—strike the sense at once, as a literal and simple transcript of actual things, neither idealized, nor improved upon, but with a religious literality set down just as they are.

Something of this reality, as well as of the sentiment of the tale, is, no doubt, due to the tone of the writer's mind—a profound sympathy with the grief, and a special one with the consolation of her story.

The Count de La Garaye is a fine portrait of the noblesse who spent their lives upon their estates, among the honourable traditions of old French chivalry, untainted by Court profligacy and hardness of heart—refined, honourable, brave, and charitable—a type rarer and still rarer as the Revolution approached.

"And merry is it in his spacious halls;
Cheerful the host, whatever sport befalls,
Cheerful and courteous, full of manly grace;
His heart's frank welcome written in his face;
So eager, that his pleasure never cloys,
But glad to share whatever he enjoys:
Rich, liberal, gaily dressed, of noble mein,
Clear eyes,—full curving mouth,—and brow serene;
Master of speech in many a foreign tongue,
And famed for feats of arms, although so young.
Dexterous in fencing, skilled in horsemanship—
His voice and hand preferred to spur or whip;
Quick at a jest and smiling repartee,
With a sweet laugh that sounded frank and free;
But holding satire an accursèd thing,
A poisoned javelin or a serpent's sting;
Pitiful to the poor; of courage high;
A soul that could all turns of fate defy:
Gentle to women; reverent to old age;
What more, young Claud, could men's esteem engage?
What more be given to bless thine earthly state,
Save Love,—which still must crown the happiest fate;
Love, therefore, came,—that sunbeam lit his life,
And where he wooed, he won, a gentle wife
Born, like himself, of lineage brave and good;
And like himself, of warm and eager mood;
Glad to share gladness, pleasure to impart,
With dancing spirits and a tender heart."

The few lines describing the lady's share in his field sports—"She was not bold from boldness, but from love"—are exquisite.

"Pleased too to share the manlier sports which made
The joy of his young hours. No more afraid
Of danger, than the seabird, used to soar
From the high rocks above the ocean's roar,
Which dips its slant wing in the wave's white crest,
And deems the foamy undulations, rest."

The court of the chateau is all astir with animated preparation for the chase, amid which we first behold the lady thus:—

"Like a sweet picture doth the lady stand,
Still blushing as she bows; one tiny hand
Hid by a pearl-embroidered gauntlet, holds
Her whip, and her long robe's exuberant folds.
The other hand is bare, and from her eyes
Shades now and then the sun, or softly lies,
With a caressing touch, upon the neck
Of the dear glossy steed she loves to deck
With saddle-housings worked in golden thread,
And golden bands upon his noble head.
White is the little hand whose taper fingers
Smoothe his fine coat,—and still the lady lingers,
Leaning against his side; nor lifts her head,
But gently turns as gathering footsteps tread;
Reminding you of doves with shifting throats,
Brooding in sunshine by their sheltering cotes.
Under her plumèd hat her wealth of curls
Falls down in golden links among her pearls,
And the rich purple of her velvet vest
Slims the young waist, and rounds the graceful breast."

The course of life at La Garaye, "careless, but not impure," among rural sports and festive gaieties, is sketched with the touch of Wouvermans or Watteau. But there is something higher and finer in this—

"They woke to gladness as the morning broke;
Their very voices kept, whene'er they spoke,
A ring of joy, a harmony of life,
That made you bless the husband and the wife.
And every day the careless festal throng,
And every night the dance and feast and song,

Shared with young boon companions, marked the time
As with a carillon's exulting chime;
Where those two entered, gloom passed out of sight,
Chased by the glow of their intense delight."

This chase, for which we saw the Lady about to mount, is doomed to be her last. A torrent intercepts their course—the Count clears it—vainly, with voice and gesture, warning her back.

"In vain: the pleasant voice she loved so well
Feebly re-echoed through that dreadful dell,
The voice that was the music of her home
Shouted in vain across that torrent's foam.
He saw her, pausing on the bank above;
Saw,—like a dreadful vision of his love,—
That dazzling dream stand on the edge of death:
Saw it—and stared—and prayed—and held his breath.
Bright shone the Autumn sun on wood and plain;
On the steed's glossy flanks and flowing mane;
On the wild silver of the rushing brook;
On his wife's smiling and triumphant look;
Bright waved against the sky her wind-tost plume
Bright on her freshened cheek the healthy bloom,—
Oh! all bright things, how could ye end in doom?"

The Countess and her palfrey fall headlong from the overhanging bank into the stream. Every line in the description of the Count's frantic struggle to reach her, quivers and tugs with an agony of energy. He does reach her—

"He's with her! Is he dying too? His blood
Beats no more to and fro. His abstract mood
Weighs like a nightmare. Something well he knows
Is horrible, and still the horror grows;
But what it is, or how it came to pass,
Or why he lies half fainting on the grass,
Or what he strove to clutch at in his fall,
Or why he had no power for help to call—
This is confused and lost."

So the lady, all but lifeless, is conveyed to the chateau. There after long suffering she so far recovers that her life is no longer in danger. But her reprieve is a sad one. Henceforward that which from some one fated hour and misadventure befalls many another mortal, has befallen the Lady of La Garaye; and though life goes on—in a certain sense, the same life—its spirit and character, are changed, like one of our melodies on a sudden transposed, thenceforward to move slowly and wildly, and in a minor key.

"Long as the vacant life trained idly by,
She pressed her pillow with a restless sigh—
'To-morrow, surely, I shall stronger feel!'
To-morrow! But the slow days onward steal,
And find her still with feverish aching head—
Still cramped with pain—still lingering in her bed—
Still sighing out the tedium of the time—
Still listening to the clock's recurring chime,
As though the very hours that struck were foes,
And might, but would not, grant complete repose,
Until the skilled physician—sadly bold
From frequent questioning—her sentence told!
That no good end could come to her faint yearning—
That no bright hour should see her health returning;
That changeful seasons—not for one dark year,
But on through life—must teach her how to bear;
For through all springs, with rainbow-tinted showers,
And through all summers, with their wealth of flowers,
And every autumn, with its harvest-home,
And all white winters of the time to come,
Crooked and sick for ever she must be;
Her life of wild activity and glee
Was with the past—the future was a life
Dismal and feeble, full of suffering, rife
With chill denials of accustomed joy,
Continual torment, and obscure annoy.
Blighted in all bloom, her withered frame
Must now inheritage—young but in name.
Never could she, at close of some long day
Of pain, that strove with hope, exulting lay
A tiny, new-born infant on her breast,
And in the soft lamp's glimmer sink to rest;
The strange corporeal weakness sweetly blent
With a delicious dream of full content—
With pride of motherhood and thankful prayers,
And a confused glad sense of novel cares,
And peeps into the future, brightly given,
As though her babe's blue eyes turned earth to heaven!

Never again could she, when Claud returned
After brief absence, and her fond heart yearned
To see his earnest eyes with upward glancing,
Greet her known windows, even while yet advancing—
Fly with light footsteps down the great hall stair,
And give him welcome in the open air
As though she were too glad to see him come,
To wait till he should enter happy home,
And there, quick-breathing, glowing, sparkling, stand;
His arm round her slim waist—hand locked in hand—
The mutual kiss exchanged of happy greeting,
That needs no secrecy of lovers' meeting;
While giving welcome, also, in their way,
Her dogs barked rustling round him, wild with play,
And voices called, and hasty steps replied,
And the sleek fiery steed was led aside,
And the gray seneschal came forth and smiled,
Who held him in his arms while yet a child;
And cheery jinglings from unfastened doors,
And vaulted echoes through long corridors,
And distant bells that thrill along the wires,
And stir of logs that heap up autumn fires,
Crowned the glad eager bustle that makes known
The master's step is on his threshold-stone!"

. . . .

"This is the life whose dreadful dawn must rise
When the night lifts, within whose gloom she lies:
Hope, on whose lingering help she leaned so late,
Struck from her clinging by the sword of fate:
That wild word NEVER, to her shrinking gaze,
Seems written on the wall in fiery rays.
Never! Our helpless changeful natures shrink
Before that word, as from the grave's cold brink!
Set us a term, whereto we must endure,
And you shall find our crown of patience sure;
But the irrevocable smites us down—
Helpless we lie before the eternal frown;
Waters of Marah whelm the blinded soul,
Stifle the heart, and drown our self-control.
So when she heard the grave physician speak,
Horror crept through her veins, who, faint and weak,
And tortured by all motion, yet had lain
With a meek cheerfulness that conquered pain,
Hoping, till that dark hour. Give back the hope,
Though years rise sad with intervening scope!
Scarce can those radiant eyes with sickly stare
Yet comprehend that sentence of despair;
Crooked and sick for ever!—crooked and sick!
She, in whose veins the passionate blood ran quick
As leaps the rivulet from the mountain height,
That dances rippling into summer light:
She, on whose cheek the rich bloom always staid,
And only deepened to a lovelier shade;
She, whose fleet limbs no exercise could tire,
When wild hill-climbing wooed her spirit higher!
Knell not above her bed this funeral chime,
Bid her be prisoner for a certain time;
Tell her blank years must waste in that changed home,
But not for ever—not for life to come;
Let infinite torture be her daily guest,
But set a term, beyond which shall be rest.
In vain! she sees that trembling fountain rise,
Tears of compassion in an old man's eyes;
And in low pitying tones again he tells
The doom that sounds to her like funeral bells.
Long on his face her wistful gaze she kept,
Then dropped her head, and wildly moaned and wept,
Shivering through every limb, as lightning thought
Smote her with all the endless ruin wrought.
Never to be a mother!—never give
Another life beyond her own to live—
Never to see her husband bless their child.
Thinking (dear blessed thought!) like him it smil'd;
Never again with Claud to walk or ride,
Partake his pleasures with a playful pride;
But cease from all companionship so shared,
And only have the hours his pity spared.
His pity—ah! his pity, would it prove
As warm and lasting as admiring love?
Or would her petty joys' late spoken doom
Carry the great joy with them to joy's tomb?
Would all the hopes of life at once take wing?—
The thought went through her with a secret sting,
And she repeated, with a moaning cry—
'Better to die, oh! God, 'twere best to die!'"

How this shadow is reflected upon

Claud, the lines which follow very beautifully describe—

"And Claud also saw
That beauty which was once without a flaw,
And flushed—but strove to hide the sense of shock,
The feelings that some witchcraft seemed to mock.
Are those her eyes—those eyes so full of pain?
Her restless looks, that hunt for ease in vain?
Is that her step, that halt, uneven tread?
Is that her blooming cheek, so pale and dead?
Is that the querulous anxious mind that tells
Its little ills, and on each ailment dwells—
The spirit alert, which early morning stirr'd,
Even as it rouses every gladsome bird,
Whose chorus of irregular music goes
Up with the dew that leaves the sun-touched rose?
Oh! altered, altered—even the smile is gone,
Which, like a sunbeam, once exulting shone!
Smiles have returned, but not the smiles of yore—
The joy, the youth, the triumph, are no more.
An anxious smile remains, that disconnects
Smiling from gladness—one that more dejects
Than floods of passionate weeping, for it tries
To contradict the question of our eyes;
We say—'Thou'rt pained, poor heart, and full of woe!'
It drops that shining veil, and answers—'No.'

And now comes that sad jealousy of which we spoke—

"But something sadder even than her pain
Torments her now, and thrills each languid vein:
Love's tender instinct feels through every nerve
When love's desires, or love itself doth swerve.
All the world's praise re-echoed to the sky,
Cancels not blame that shades a lover's eye;
All the world's blame, which scorn for scorn repays,
Fails to disturb the joy of lovers' praise.
Ah! think not vanity alone doth deck
With rounded pearls the young girl's innocent neck,
Who in her duller days contented tries
The homely robe, that with no rival vies,
But on the happy night she hopes to meet
The one to whom she comes with trembling feet,
With crimson roses decks her bosom fair,
Warm as the thoughts of love all glowing there,
Because she must his favourite colours wear;
And all the bloom and beauty of her youth
Can scarce repay, she thinks, her lover's truth."

. . . .

"Gertrude of La Garaye thy heart is sore—
A worm is gnawing at the rose's core;
A doubt corrodeth all thy tender trust—
The freshness of thy day is choked in dust.
Not for the pain, although the pain be great—
Not for the change, though changed be all thy state;
But for a sorrow, dumb and unrevealed,
Most from its cause with mournful care concealed—
From Claud, who goes and who returns with sighs,
And gazes on his wife with wistful eyes.
And muses in his brief and cheerless rides
If her dull mood will mend; and inly chides
His own sad spirit, that sinks down so low,
Instead of lifting her from all her woe;
And thinks if he but loved her less, that he
Could cheer her drooping soul with gaiety;
But wonders evermore that beauty's loss
To such a soul should seem so sore a cross.
Until one evening in that quiet hush
That lulls the falling day, when all the gush
Of various sounds seems buried with the sun,
He told his thought.
As winter streamlets run,
Freed by some sudden thaw, and swift make way
Into the natural channels where they play,
So leaped her young heart to his tender tone,
So answering to his warmth, resumed her own;
And all her doubt and all her grief confest,
Leaning her faint head on his faithful breast.
'Not always, Claud, did I my beauty prize—
Thy words first made it precious in my eyes,
And till thy fond voice made the gift seem rare—
Nor tongue nor mirror taught me I was fair.
I recked no more of beauty in that day
Of happy girlishness and childlike play,
Than some poor woodland bird who stays his flight
On some low bough when summer days are bright,
And in that pleasant sunshine sits and sings,
And beaks the plumage of his glistening wings,

Recks of the passer-by, who stands to praise
His feathered smoothness and his thrilling lays.
But now I make my moan—I make my moan—
I weep the brightness lost, the beauty gone;
Because now fading is to fall from thee,
As the dead fruit falls blighted from the tree;
For thee—not vanished loveliness—I weep,
My beauty was a spell thy love to keep;
For I have heard and read how men forsake
When time and tears that gift of beauty take,
Nor care although the heart they leave may break!'
A husband's love was there—a husband's love,
Strong, comforting, all other loves above;
On her bowed neck he laid his tender hand,
And his voice steadied to his soul's command:
'Oh! thou mistaken and unhappy child,
Still thy complainings, for thy words are wild;
Thy beauty, though so perfect, was but one
Of the bright ripples dancing to the sun,
Which from the hour I hoped to call thee wife,
Glanced down the silver stream of happy life.
Whatever change Time's heavy clouds may make,
Those are the waters which my thirst shall slake.
River of all my hopes thou wert and art,
The current of thy being bears my heart—
Whether it sweep along in shine or shade,
By barren rocks, or banks in flowers arrayed,
Foam with the storm, or glide in soft repose—
In that deep channel love unswerving flows!'

. . . .

But she again—'Alas! not from distrust,
I mourn, dear Claud, nor yet to thee unjust.
I love thee—I believe thee; yea, I know
Thy very soul is wrung to see my woe;
The earthquake of compassion trembles still
Within its depths, and conquers natural will.
But after, after, when the shock is past—
When cruel Time, who flies to change so fast,
Hath made my suffering an accustomed thing,
And only left me slowly withering;
Then will the empty days rise chill and lorn,
The lonely evening, the unwelcome morn,
Until thy path at length be brightly crost
By some one holding all that I have lost;
Some one with youthful eyes, enchanting bright,
Full as the morning of a liquid light;
And while my pale lip, stiff and sad remains,
Her smiles shall thrill like sunbeams through thy veins:
I shall fade down, and she with simple art,
All bloom and beauty, dance into thy heart!
Then, then, my Claud, shall I—at length alone—
Recede from thee with an unnoticed moan,
Sink where none heed me, and be seen no more.'"

. . . .

Claud's gentle and tender answer follows, ending which he says—

"'Let those who can in transient loves rejoice,
Still to new hopes breathe forth successive sighs—
Give me the music of the accustomed voice,
And the sweet light of long familiar eyes!'
He ceased. But she, for all his fervent speech,
Sighed as she listened. 'Claud, I cannot reach
The summit of the hope where thou wouldst set me,
And all I crave is never to forget me!
Wedded I am to pain, and not to thee,
Thy life's companion I no more can be;
For thou remainest all thou wert—but I
Am a fit bride for death, and long to die:
Yea, long for death, for thou wouldst miss me then
More even than now, in mountain and in glen;
And musing by the white tomb where I lay,
Think of the happier time and earlier day,
And wonder if the love another gave
Equalled the passion buried in that grave.'"

Again he replies, and his last words we quote, and with them, the sweet lines which close the scene.

"'Oh! loved even to the brim of love's full fount,
Wilt thou set nothing to firm faith's account?
Choke back thy tears which are my bitter smart,
Lean thy dear head upon my aching heart;
It may be, God, who saw our careless life,
Not sinful, yet not blameless, my sweet wife,

(Since all we thought of, in our youth's bright May,
Was but the coming joy, from day to day;)
Hath blotted out all joy to bid us learn
That this is not our home; and make us turn
From the enchanted earth, where much was given,
To higher aims, and a forgotten heaven.'
So spoke her love—and wept in spite of words;
While her heart echoed all his heart's accords;
And leaning down, she said, with whispering sigh,
'I sinned, my Claud, in wishing so to die.'
Then they, who oft in Love's delicious bowers
Had fondly wasted glad and passionate hours,
Kissed with a mutual moan:—but o'er their lips
Love's light passed clear, from under Life's eclipse."

The relief, however, is but momentary; the old yearnings return; and the melodious lines that follow describe her sad estate.

"It may not be! Blighted are summer hours!
The bee goes booming through the plats of flowers,
The butterfly its tiny mate pursues
With rapid fluttering of its painted hues,
The thin-winged gnats their transient time employ
Reeling through sunbeams in a dance of joy,
The small field-mouse with wide transparent ears
Comes softly forth, and softly disappears,
The dragon-fly hangs glittering on the reed,
The spider swings across his filmy thread,
And gleaming fishes, darting to and fro,
Make restless silver in the pools below.
All these poor lives—these lives of small account,
Feel the ethereal thrill within them mount;
But the great human life,—the life divine,—
Rests in dull torture, heavy and supine,
And the bird's song, by Garaye's walls of stone,
Crosses within the irrepressible moan!"

As we draw near the close of the tale, its beautiful moral begins to open.

"Was then DESPAIR the end of all this woe?
Far off the angel voices answer, No!
Devils despair, for they believe and tremble;
But man believes and hopes. Our griefs resemble
Each other but in this. Grief comes from Heaven;
Each thinks his own the bitterest trial given;
Each wonders at the sorrows of his lot;
His neighbour's sufferings presently forgot,
Though wide the difference which our eyes can see
Not only in grief's kind, but its degree.
God grants to some all joys for their possession,
Nor loss, nor cross, the favoured mortal mourns;
While some toil on, outside those bounds of blessing,
Whose weary feet for ever tread on thorns.
But over all our tears God's rainbow bends;
To all our cries a pitying ear He lends:
Yea, to the feeble sound of man's lament
How often have His messengers been sent!"

There comes to the chateau a Benedictine prior, a breathing, Titian-like portrait of the finest type of the Roman ecclesiastic.

"He sits by Gertrude's couch and patient listens
To her wild grieving voice;—his dark eye glistens
With tearful sympathy for that young wife,
Telling the torture of her broken life:
And when he answers her she seems to know
The peace of resting by a river's flow.
Tender his words, and eloquently wise;
Mild the pure fervour of his watchful eyes;
Meek with serenity of constant prayer
The luminous forehead, high and broad and bare;
The thin mouth, though not passionless, yet still;
With a sweet calm that speaks an angel's will,
Resolving service to his God's behest,
And ever musing how to serve Him best.
Not old, nor young; with manhood's gentlest grace;
Pale to transparency, the pensive face,
Pale not with sickness, but with studious thought,
The body tasked, the fine mind overwrought;
With something faint and fragile in the whole,
As though 'twere but a lamp to hold a soul.

Such was the friend who came to La Garaye,
And Claud and Gertrude lived to bless the day!"

He reasons simply and gently with the poor lady of La Garaye. He shows her the vanity of the world, the common misery of man, and gently and firmly, but without upbraiding, points out to her all the alleviations with which fortune and circumstance surround her. He contrasts with her favoured lot in sickness and helplessness the terrible aggravations that beset and overpower the poor, and he paints sorrows more dismal and appalling than her own, in melancholy variety. In this sad and solemn homily, picture succeeds picture in powerful and striking contrast.

"What hath the slandered done, who vainly strives
To set his life among untarnished lives?
Whose bitter cry for justice only fills
The myriad echoes lost among life's hills;
Who hears for evermore the self-same lie
Clank clog-like at his heel when he would try
To climb above the loathly creeping things,
Whose venom poisons, and whose fury stings,
And so slides back; for ever doomed to hear
The old witch, Malice, hiss with serpent leer
The old hard falsehood to the old bad end,
Helped, it may be, by some traducing friend,
Or one rocked with him on one mother's breast,
Learned in the art of where to smite him best."

. . . .

"The death of the FORSAKEN! lone he lies,
His sultry noon, fretted by slow black flies,
That settle on pale cheek and quivering brow
With a soft torment. The increasing glow
Brings the full shock of day; the hot air grows
Impure alike from action and repose;
Bruised fruit, and faded flowers, and dung and dust,
The rich man's stew-pan, and the beggar's crust,
Poison the faint lips opening hot and dry,
Loathing the plague they breathe with gasping sigh,
The thick oppression of its stifling heat,
The busy murmer of the swarming street,
The roll of chariots and the rush of feet;
With the tormenting music's nasal twang
Distorting melodies his loved ones sang!

. . . .

"Last cometh on the night—the hot, bad night,
With less of all—of heat, of dust, of light;
And leaves him watching, with a helpless stare,
The theme of no one's hope and no one's care!
The cresset lamp, that stands so grim and tall,
Widens and wavers on the upper wall;
And calming down from day's perpetual storm
His thoughts' dark chaos takes some certain form,
And he begins to pine for joys long lost,
Or hopes unrealized; till bruised and tossed,
He sends his soul vain journeys through the gloom,
For radiant eyes that should have wept his doom.
Then clasps his hands in prayer, and for a time,
Gives aspirations unto things sublime:
But sinking to some speck of sorrow, found
Some point which, like a little festering wound,
Holds all his share of pain,—he gazes round,
Seeking some vanished form, some hand whose touch
Would almost cure him; and he yearns so much,
That passionate painful sobs his breathing choke,
And the thin bubble of his dream hath broke!"

So the lady of La Garaye finds a new interest and a noble consolation, toned by religion and brightened with a serene and eternal hope, in a life of active and self-devoted charity, in which her noble husband joins heart and hand. Thus, after the glory of their early joy is set, and an interval of troubled darkness, there rises over the silence of the scene a tranquil, silvery, and beautiful light, amid which we leave them, serenely awaiting the great day-spring that will flood the world with imperishable glory, a jubilee of adoration, gratitude, and all beautiful affections—eternal youth—the body redeemed, and the spirit made perfect.

The institutions founded by their charity have survived all other monuments of their early splendour and ancient name.

"Still thrives the noble hospital that gave
Shelter to those whom none from pain could save;
Still to the schools the ancient chiming clock
Calls the poor yeanlings of a simple flock:
Still the calm refuge for the fallen and lost
(Whom love a blight and not a blessing crost)."

The poem reminds us of an image of Chateaubriand's. It is like a modern writing traced over an ancient manuscript. Beneath the homely and harmonious tale of the personal loves and sorrows of Gertrude and Claud, in bold though subdued characters, are written the grand lessons and principles which enter into the moral history of the entire human race. We are nowhere quite unconscious of the presence of the sad and higher moral of the tale. In the breaks and pauses of mortal sorrow, it is heard like far-off church-music, solemn and plaintive, toning gradually the wild notes and sobs of human lamentation, until swelling higher and nearer, it absorbs and overpowers them all.

We have long looked in vain for a poem like this, so entirely unaffected, so perfectly original, so true and yet so fanciful, so strong and yet so womanly, with painting so exquisite, with a moral anatomization so sure and subtle, so pure a portraiture of the highest affections and the deepest sorrows, and instilling a lesson so true, simple, and sublime.

FORGOTTEN NOVELS.

Of all mental occupations that of the composition of poems, novels, or romances, by individuals not destined to acquire reputation, is the most uncalled-for, the most profitless, and the least self-gratifying to the author, when the first pleasure of seeing himself in type has evaporated. Sweet is the applause of a crowded audience to actor or orator; very bitter their disapprobation. The eager yearning for the sympathy and esteem of our fellow-creatures is the passion that rules the writer at his desk, as well as the actor on his stage, and the orator on his platform. But when he finds, by the blame or neglect of the organs of public opinion, or, worse still, the very limited sale of his work, the narrowness of the circle within which he has been able to please or interest; and when he further reflects on the time, and research, and mental toil, that were necessary to produce the valueless work (valueless, at least, as to its success), all that remains for him, if he be a modest man, is mortification or disgust. If he be wise as well as modest, he gives another direction to his faculties, and forswears the thankless, self-imposed task of endeavouring to become the central object of public opinion and attention, and finds some suitable occupation for such talents as he really possesses.

But wo to the friends and acquaintances of the unsuccessful, but obstinate and self-complacent man of letters, whether poor or rich; the poor man possessing a double power of boredom. The acquaintances of Dives are punished only to the extent of turning over the leaves, and (if conscience allow) giving undeserved praise to the performance; but the friends of poor Lazarus, along with these inconveniences, find themselves disagreeably affected in that sensitive portion of their compound nature—their pockets. Dives, however, is not so useless in his generation after all. He pays his bills like a man; and the industrious makers of paper, and ink, and millboards, manufacturers of calf, russia, and morocco, printers, engravers, and bookbinders, find employment through his good opinion of his own abilities. Besides, if Dives had not taken so diligently to his desk, he might perhaps have got into mischief, the more mischievous to his fellow-creatures as he is a man of mark and wealth.

Then with reference to the case of Lazarus. If not a man of genius, he at least possesses an active mind; activity of mind, in most natures, is consistent only with inactivity of body;—inactivity of body is the distinctive mark of the lazy man;—and the lazy man, when not employed doing nothing, is surely occupied doing ill. Consequently, Lazarus is doing less harm tagging rhymes or manufacturing new stories out of old ones, than if writing begging letters, falsifying accounts, or imitating the autographs of respectable men on stamped paper. It may, perhaps, be objected that Lazarus, though an unsuccessful author, might make a decent bank clerk, or assistant in a monster house, or inspector of jaunting-cars; but the man we have in our eye, though devoid of needful genius, or even talent, possesses literary taste, and is affected by the itch of writing; and if not permitted to write, he will do worse for a certainty.

Let us, however, turn our eyes from ungifted Dives and ungifted Lazarus, and at the risk of being dazzled, fix them on the possessor of genius, the exalted above his brothers, whose name is familiar wherever his language is spoken or understood, who holds the heart-strings of millions in his left hand, who reads his praises in journals without number, and who, when he enters the public assembly, sees round him a sea of admiring and friendly countenances, and drinks in with his ears acclamations redolent of admiration and attachment.

But is such a person to be blessed above all human kind? Is his lot an exception to the mingled condition of humanity? What has he done that he should be thus singled out from his fellow-men? Patience! there are serious drawbacks. Is it nothing that the voices of unsuccessful rivals be raised in choruses of disparagement, of dispraise, of obloquy? that he must task his imaginative powers to the utmost, so that the new production may, if not excel, at least equal its forerunners? that the atmosphere breathed by his mental faculties must be of a more stimulating quality than that used by more ordinary minds, and thus shorten the term of healthy life? that he is in some sort an isolated being, and as such, shut out from the enjoyments and comforts of domestic life? that he must submit to see the world of letters deluged by innumerable wretched imitations of his style, and exaggerations of his faults and defects, and that exertions, such as he is ceaselessly urged to make, result, in the decline of life, in the serious injury or loss of the powers of the mind?

But between the mere aspirants and the genius-endowed men fated to delight and instruct successive generations, come those whose works enjoy a certain popularity in their own time, are neglected by the children of their contemporaries, and are nearly unknown in the third generation. A living person cognizant of the variety and amazing number of the novels which have been issued since 1830, and immediately forgotten, and striving to make himself master of novel statistics from 1760 to 1830, will be enabled to guess at the vast number of volumes issued during that period.

Old catalogues and the Censura Literaria will give an idea of the tons and tons of literary rubbish, including some really meritorious works, which passed a few times from the circulating shelves, made their way in odd volumes to old book stalls, and finally to the paper-mills, or kitchen grates.

It is discouraging to reflect on the small number of the works in question, published last century, that are now considered worthy of republication. The "Vicar of Wakefield" is still read by old and young. Smollett's and Fielding's novels continue in favour with people who think they may safely read any thing, and with youths whose mental taste resembles that of lovers of wild fowl a little on the turn. "Pamela" may keep company with these (the good intention of the author notwithstanding); and "Sir Charles Grandison," and "Clarissa Harlowe,"* will continue to be acceptable on desert islands, and in the parlours of country inns in rainy weather. "Amelia," "Sir Launcelot Greaves," and "Humphrey Clinker," are presentable even in the staid reunions of this nineteenth century.

The "Rasselas" of Dr. Johnson, and the novels of Mme. D'Arblay are still taken up by readers advanced in years, who cannot forget the agreeable associations of youth and freedom from care connected with their perusal long ago; but our youth are too much occupied with "Dead Secrets," and "Women in White," and "Strange Stories," and "Philips' Ways in the World," and "Great Expectations," with their movement, picturesqueness, brisk and animated conversations, and exciting plots—too much occupied, we repeat, to spare time for the sentimentalities, and skim-milk dialogues, and slow progress encountered in parts of the fascinating Fanny's fashionable novels.

The business of this paper is not so much with the works of authors still read; it is rather with those that are half or wholly forgotten, but which were either possessed of some worth, or characteristic of their times. It is a pitiable thing to find all memory of a work, the result of anxious meditation, of just thought, of close observation, and of a lively fancy, as much forgotten as if it had never been called into existence.

The good George Berkeley, D.D. and Bishop of Cloyne, found time, amid his religious and charitable duties, and the publishing of his essays on Tar-water, Infidelity, the true principles of Vision, and the difficulty of proving your hand or foot to possess substance—to write a philosophical story. An officer of the Inquisition gives an account to his friend of a stranger who had been settled some time at Bologna, and whom that body had taken into custody in order to learn the particulars of his past life, and whether he was in reality a "good Catholic," or a Jew or Mussulman in disguise.

> "His name, as he says, is Gaudentio di Lucca. He is a tall, handsome, clean-built Man† as you shall see in a Thousand, of a very Polite Address, and something very engaging in his Aspect as

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* Our want of partiality for these novels is not owing to want of interest in the story, nor want of talent in the writer, but to their dreadful length.

† In this extract no alteration has been attempted in the use of the capital letters.

bespeaks your Favour at first Sight. . . . He speaks almost all the Oriental Languages, and has a very competent Share of other Parts of Learning as that of his Profession. . . . There was an elderly Lady we thought had been his Wife, but it proved she was not: a Foreigner for whom he seemed to have a great Respect, and her Maid a Foreigner also, and an elderly Maid Servant of the Town. We let him alone for some time having a person under our Examination on suspicion of being a Jew in Masquerade and a spy from the Grand Signor, which kept us employed for some time . . . At length talking with one of Our Spies one Day about Foreign Countries, he said he had met with a Nation in one of the remotest Parts of the World, who though they were Heathens, had more Knowledge of the Law of Nature and common Morality than the most civilized Christians. . . . Another Time, as he had a great Knowledge in Philosophy, he dropt some words as if he had some skill in Judiciary Astrology, which you know, Sir, is a Capital Crime with us. We were as good as resolved to seize him, when we were determined to it by the following Accident. Two of the most beautiful Women in all Bologna had fallen in Love with him, either on account of the Handsomeness of his person, or by a Whimsicalness peculiar to some Women because he was a Stranger, . . . or in fine, drawn in by some Love Potion or other, we can't tell. . . . On his showing more Favour to one than the other, this one, to be revenged, said he had bewitched her, : . . for since the very first time she saw him she thought there was something more in him than ever she saw in any Man in her Life. Besides, she said she had often found him drawing Circles and Figures on Paper which to her looked like conjuration."

So the poor signor is brought before the Inquisition, to whom he gives an account of his parentage, &c., and particularly of his having been brought through captivity and divers strange adventures, among a most exemplary nation of sun-worshippers in Africa. The Inquisitors are seized with a desire to convert the well-disposed race to Christianity, and they give Gaudentio liberty to travel for a twelvemonth, by way of testing his truth. If he return voluntarily, they will send missionaries under his guidance to convert these heathens. This framework furnishes the good and learned prelate with an opportunity of giving utterance to many a word of deep wisdom and judicious remark on the mythology and government of the old Pagans. Our copy of the Gaudentio di Lucca is dated, Dublin, 1738; printer—G. Faulkner.

"Chrysal, or the Adventures of a Guinea," though exhibiting much vigour in description and happy delineation of character, is not likely to be reprinted. The coin, or rather its genius, has an opportunity, while passing from hand to hand, to become acquainted with the characters, the virtues, and vices of the public characters of the time, and the affairs of the State. The author, Charles Johnstone, an Irishman by birth, composed the work at Lord Mount Edgecombe's in Devonshire, and published it about the year 1760. It came to the third edition in 1761. Ours is a Dublin copy, 1767. Many things of an objectionable character are described without any apparent ill intention, and considerable prejudice and unfairness are shown in sketching public men. Thus the zealous and self-denying Whitfield is treated very unjustly. The Atheistic Frederic —Voltaire's Frederic—prays like Steele's Christian Hero, and the Jews celebrate the Passover by the immolation of a Christian child. Johnstone had his *Marquis of Steyne* as well as the author of "Vanity Fair," in the Earl of Sandwich. He went to India in 1782, and died there in good circumstances in 1800, in the 70th year of his age.

The "Castle of Otranto," of which only slight mention is necessary, as the merits of the work and the rank and fame of the author, Horace Walpole, have preserved its reputation for a century, was issued in 1764. It was a happy attempt to combine an interesting story with a glimpse of life in the feudal times, and invest both with interest of a fearfully supernatural character. It was the earliest specimen in England of the genuine feudal romance after the dreadful tedious folio romances of Calprenede and the Scuderis had been banished by the productions of Smollett, and Fielding, and Richardson.

The authoress of "The Memoirs of Miss Sidney Bidulph," was the mother of Richard Brinsley Sheridan. Daughter of a clergyman, who did not see the necessity of even having her taught to read, she acquired literary fame by her writings. In her youth she was not allowed to be present at a theatrical performance, yet she became the wife of an accomplished actor.

Frances Chamberlayne was born in the year 1724. She received her first lessons from her brothers, and at the age of fifteen composed a romance, "Eugenia and Adelaide." When Thomas Sheridan, son of Swift's Dr. Sheridan, manager of the Dublin theatre, was an object of persecution to some hot-blooded bucks of the day, for having struck one of their companions in defence of an actress of his company, Miss Chamberlayne and the newspapers took up the quarrel in great excitement. Miss Chamberlayne sent some verses to one of the journals, extolling the conduct of the chivalrous manager. This was in the year 1746. Mr. Sheridan and his fair champion being subsequently introduced to each other, were united in marriage in 1747. Richard Brinsley, her third son, was born in 1751. Her daughter Alicia, born in 1753, acquired a reputation for literary abilities.

"Sidney Bidulph" was published in 1761, when Mr. and Mrs. Sheridan were residing in London, and enjoying the society of Dr. Johnson, Dr. Young, Samuel Richardson, Sarah Fielding, sister to Henry, and authoress of "David Simple," the beautiful and witty Mrs. Cholmondeley—the *Lady Anne Wilmot* and *Belle Fermor* of two of Mrs. Brooke's novels, Mrs. Macaulay, and others. In 1764 the family removed to France, and settled at Blois, Mr. Sheridan being at the time in the enjoyment of a pension of £200. Her death took place in 1767.

Mrs. Sheridan was much beloved by her family and intimate acquaintance, a proof of her naturally good disposition. She was warm in temper, as most really tender-hearted people are, and was genuinely religious. We have had the pleasure of looking on her portrait, attired in the ugly costume of her day, the features expressive of thought and goodness.

It was our fortune to meet the "Memoirs of Miss Sidney Bidulph," long since in the country, where books were few, and the wayward undeserved destiny of *Orlando Faulkland* troubled us for many a day. We should not recommend the plan of the work to a novel writer of our day. The lady and gentleman seem designed by their good qualities, accomplishments, personal merits, and mutual love, each to complete the worldly happiness of the other; but once on the eve of marriage, and again after being actually married, they are cruelly separated. Now, if the agents of evil were wild beasts, feudal barons, earthquakes, or thunder storms, we might perhaps be reconciled. But no. A hasty prejudiced mother will not condescend to read an unsealed letter lying in her hand. The well-principled Orlando marries a worthless woman from a mistaken sense of duty and a feeling of compassion, and thus entails certain misery on himself and her whom he still adores, when all might be prevented by his merely acquainting his bosom friend, the brother of Sidney, with what he was going to do.

The novel consists of a series of letters, and the general style is that which would be adopted by well-educated ladies and gentlemen in communicating domestic news of an interesting nature to absent friends. There is no attempt at fine writing, and the reader feels no want of it. His wishes are interested, from near the beginning of the first volume, in the hoped-for union of Orlando and Sidney; and there is always some vista left open, through which the expected light may agreeably flash in at some moment to dissipate the sad obscurity in which the interests of the lovers are involved. The characters in the tale are not very numerous, and are all distinctly marked. The progress of the story is seldom at a stand-still, and the incidents, though commonplace, are well introduced, and interest the reader, every one suitably preparing for the catastrophe. There are scattered through the work several sketches of domestic life in the middle and next higher class. The authoress was remarkable for her conversational powers, and there is some talking scattered through the work; but the tale was too earnest in character to endure a profusion of wit or humour. There are a few glimpses of quiet humour here and there, but no specimens whatever of flippancy and smartness, so frequent in the novels of Miss Burney and Mr. Richardson. Orlando is always spoken of as a character imperfect and impetuous in disposition, but he has the reader's earnest sympathy throughout. Sidney's misfortunes are imputed to fate —the fate of novelists; but we could easily point out instances where her own want of a firm constant purpose was much to blame. Perhaps the authoress intended to show that the obedience due by young ladies to their parents should have certain limits where marriage is in question. A small portion is given of the heroine's letter in reference to her feelings towards her proposed lover.

> "Cecilia, if I am in love with him, I do not yet know it myself. I will repeat it to you—I think him the most amiable of men, and should certainly give him the preference, if I were left to a free choice, over all the rest of his sex—at least all that I have ever yet seen. Possibly there may be handsomer, wiser, better men, but they have not fallen within my observation. I am not, however, so prepossessed in his favour as to suppose him a phœnix; and if any unforeseen event were to prevent my being his, I am sure I should bear it, and behave very handsomely.
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> "And yet, perhaps, this may be bragging like a coward, because I think a very short time will put it out of the power of fortune to divide us. Still I endeavour to keep a guard over my wishes, and will not give my heart leave to centre *all* its happiness in him, and therefore I cannot rank myself among the first-rate lovers who have neither eyes, nor ears, nor sensations, but for one object. *This,* Mr. Falkland says, is his case in regard to me. But I think we women should not love at such a rate till duty makes the passion a virtue; and till that becomes my case, I am determined not to let love absorb any of the other cordial affections which I owe to my relations and my friends."

Mrs. Sheridan's beautiful story of "Nourjahad," who is in the end practically convinced that obtaining all our desires in this life would only conduce to our utter misery, has found its place among the British classic tales.

The Abbé Prèvost, author of "Manon L'Escaut" and the "Dean of Coleraine," translated the novel of "Sidney Bidulph" into French, with the title of "Mémoires d'une Jeune Dame." It met with great success, as did also a drama founded on a portion of the story. Our copy of the novel is the fourth edition; Chamberlayne, College-green, 1782.

The "Old Manor House" still has a hold on vitality—at least such vitality as is conferred by the Dotheboys press of Halifax. The other novels of Charlotte Smith, though enjoying such taking titles as "Emmeline, the Orphan of the Castle," "Ethelinde, or the Recluse of the Lake," are now only inquired for by the few surviving patrons of the library of Leadenhall-street, so long protected by its leaden-speared Minerva. In one respect the literary caterers for our grandmothers soared much beyond living novelists—the invention of good titles. A volume published by Anne Lemoine, Coleman-street, date unknown, entitled "Wild Roses"—a volume the delight of our boyhood, and still most precious from early associations, boasted names which would never have blessed the imaginations of even our living princes in the art; let them read these titles, and never presume to invent another:—"Twelve o'Clock, or the Three Robbers;" "The Monks of Cluny, or Castle Acre Monastery;" "The Tomb of Aurora, or the Mysterious Summons;" "The Mysterious Spaniard, or the Ruins of St. Luke's Abbey;" "Barbastal, or the Magician of the Forest of Bloody Ash!"

It might be thought from the titles that "Emmeline" and "Ethelinde" were wild romances, but they are, on the contrary, conversant with the concerns of ordinary life, present striking pictures of individual character, and pleasing sketches of scenery, peculiar to the southern coasts of England, exhibit passages of humour and satire, and treat the virtue of constancy to our first love in a very worldly and prudent style. It must be owned that the writer's humour is rather of a grim fashion. Indulged during her girlhood in unrestrained access to works of fiction, and the chief part of her time taken up with balls, concerts, and parties of pleasure, she made an unsuitable match, and after some time was reduced to great straits by the results of an absurd will of her father-in-law, and the misconduct of her husband. Brought up as she had been, she still fought a most heroic battle for the maintenance and education of her children, and most of her works, amounting to twenty in all, were written for that sole purpose. It is not to be wondered at that the plots of some are not very consistent, being constructed among household cares and business distractions. She incurred some blame for making a translation of the Abbé Prèvost's notorious work, and for the spirit of her novel, "Desmond," savouring a little of Godwin, and Mary Wolstonecraft, and Mme. de Stael's "Delphine."

Charlotte Turner was born in May, 1749, at Bignor, in Sussex, was married to Mr. Smith, son of a West India merchant, February, 1765, and died October, 1805. Her selections from the "Causes Célébres" were published in 1786; "Emmeline," 1788; "Ethelinde," 1789; "The Old Manor House," 1793, and "Rural Walks," 1796.

Mrs. Anne Radcliffe and her romances need small notice. Her works are still sought, and much has been written on herself and the school of romance of which she is considered the founder. This idea is not thoroughly correct. All her preternatural doings, with one exception, are shams; and before they made their appearance we had the genuine ghostly terrors of the "Castle of Otranto," and the impressive apparition of the defunct Lord Lovel in Clara Reeves's "Old English Baron," which was published in 1777. Our youthful disappointments in the impotent conclusion of the "Mysteries of Udolpho," and in the non-clearing up of some of her other mysteries, was extreme. On our first acquaintance with *Udolpho*, which was forcibly interrupted after a quarter of an hour's reading, we got into the dark subterranean passage, and beheld by the light of the torch, which would on no inducement burn clear for ten seconds, the grim *Barnardino*, half dragging, half leading, the white-muslined heroine along. Oh, what a contrast between the russet-booted, flapped-hatted, buff-gauntleted, bearded brigand, and the shrinking, terrified beauty! And what a scene of sweet terror, where she is reading the fearful tale in the large stately bed in a corner of the vast room, the flickering lamp flinging the immense shadows to the farther regions of the dim apartment, and the terrors of the story enhanced by these noises, so weak, yet so distinct in the palpable silence! Ah! what is that sudden click? what projects that awful shade? But oh, the paltry wax figure at the end! and oh, our youthful faith and trust so sadly abused!

Anne Ward, the daughter of respectable parents engaged in trade, was born 9th July, 1764, and married Mr. Radcliffe, a gentleman of the law, and graduate of Oxford, 1787. In 1794 she accompanied her husband on a tour through the Netherlands and West Germany. In 1800 occurred the deaths of her father and mother. Her own death took place on the 7th of February, 1823. She appears to have been of an amiable, retiring disposition, and very attentive to her household concerns; and by all that can be gathered from report of friends, herself and her husband enjoyed a tranquil life, varied only by summer excursions to different parts of the south of England. These are the names and dates of her works: "Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne," 1789; "Sicilian Romance," 1790; "Romance of the Forest," 1791; "Mysteries of Udolpho," 1794; "Journey through Holland," &c., 1795; "The Italian," 1797; "Gaston de Blondeville," "St. Alban's Abbey," &c., with an undoubted ghost, posthumous, with preface by Sergeant Talfourd (qu.) 1826.

Mrs. Cholmondeley, the devoted friend of Mrs. Sheridan—so devoted, indeed, as to take a party of friends with her to the gallery on the first night of one of her dramatic pieces, in order to insure its success—was mentioned as figuring in two of Mrs. Brooke's novels. This lady wrote the "History of Lady Julia Mandeville," 1763; "Letters from Lady Juliet Catesby to Lady Henrietta Campley," "History of Emily Montague," "Memoirs of the Marquis of St. Forlaix," and others, along with the successful musical piece of "Rosina." Her maiden name was Moore. Her husband, the Rev. Mr. Brooke, died in 1789, and she survived him only a few days.

Of Henry Brooke, our countryman, we have less need of speaking, as his "Fool of Quality" has been lately re-published under the friendly care of the Rev. Mr. Kingsley. He was born in 1708, and received his education in Trinity College. While residing in London in 1737, he wrote the drama of "Gustavus Vasa," which, however, was not at first allowed to be acted. In 1763 he established the still flourishing *Freeman's Journal*, first published at Audoen's-arch. The "Fool of Quality" was published in 1766, and "Juliet Grenville," 1774. He resided in the county Cavan in the decline of life. His death took place in Dublin, in the year 1783.

Plays, balls, and novels, have been likened, by a profound thinker, to mushrooms, of the best of which it can only be said that they are harmless; any use of the bad, and a too liberal use of the harmless, is sure to be mischievous. The eighteenth century was not distinguished by a religious spirit. The novels written for the amusement of an indevout people were not likely to go out of their way to inculcate a Christian spirit and Christian practices; and novel writers, Christian at heart, such as Frances Sheridan and Charlotte Smith, thought they were doing best by saying as little as possible on the subject. Thus, an actor of a pious turn (let us hope there are many such), does not relish a part in which he would have to sing a hymn or say a prayer. Still, on the whole, immorality or infidelity were not recommended for general adoption. Those patrons of the circulating libraries who did not think the native productions were sufficiently immoral or exciting, had the article required either in the original French or in an indifferent translation.

In 1774, the "Sorrows of Werter," set many a sentimental swain in the Slough of Despond, if his neighbour's wife would not prove less prudent than Charlotte, or if his nerves were not strong enough for suicide. When infidelity and unsanctified love came into fashion with the French Revolution, things became still worse. "Female Werters," living in the bosoms of families, and writing to absent friends so many letters as would just complete a volume of their hopeless and unrequited loves for the married heads of the said families, and finally taking a dose of poison in the last page, drew floods of tears from sentimental youths and maidens, but did not tend to make them better men nor women.

William Godwin, having succeeded in extinguishing in his understanding the gift of heavenly light, and given his conscience a sleeping dose, rejoiced from afar at the Paris spectacle of 1793, and set about establishing the reign of evil on earth by the publication of his "Political Justice." He endeavoured to strengthen the cause in 1797, by bringing out his "Examiner." In these he proved, to his own satisfaction, that nothing can be more injudicious than duty to parents, love to brothers or sisters in preference to unprincipled philosophers, fidelity to wife or husband, or abiding by marriage vows; furthermore, that by exerting our energies we should surmount human ills, and, in fact, renew the golden age on earth, every one living according to nature—all restraints removed. In his novels the mere naturally good feelings with which his nature was endowed, considerably modified these moral axioms; in consequence his fictions are much safer reading than his grave essays. Several scenes of description and action are powerfully described, but there is little unity of interest, and the result of their perusal is a feeling of unpleasantness and discomfort.

In his preface to "St. Leon," a story of the class to which "Salathiel" and "Zanoni" belong, he puts his readers in a better disposition towards him by this avowal of a modification in the extreme views avowed in his essays:—

"Some readers of my graver productions will, perhaps, in perusing these little volumes, accuse me of inconsistency, the affections and charities of private life being everywhere in this publication a topic of the warmest eulogium, while in the "Political Justice" they seemed to be treated with no indulgence and (or ?) favour . . . But for more than four years I have been anxious for opportunity and leisure to modify some of the earlier chapters of that work, in conformity to the sentiments inculcated in this. Not that I see any cause to make any change in the system there delivered, but that I apprehend domestic and private affections inseparable from the nature of man, and from what may be styled culture of the heart, and not incompatible with a profound and active sense of justice in the mind of him that cherishes them . . . A sound morality requires that nothing human should be regarded by us as indifferent, . . . and true wisdom will recommend to us individual attachments, for with them our minds are more strongly maintained in activity and life; and it is better that a man should be a living being, than a stock or a stone (wonderful discovery!) True

> virtue will sanction this recommendation, since it is the object of virtue to produce happiness, and since the man who lives in the midst of domestic relations, will have many opportunities of conferring pleasure, minute in the detail, yet not trivial in the amount, without interfering with the purposes of general benevolence."

Godwin, notwithstanding his erroneous opinions, was the son of a dissenting clergyman, and had discharged clerical functions himself. He was born at Wisbeach, Cambridgeshire, 3rd March, 1756. His "Caleb Williams," appeared 1794; Memoirs of his wife, Mary Wolstonecraft, 1798; "St. Leon," 1799; "Life of Chaucer," 1803; "Fleetwood," 1805. Besides these and others, he wrote histories of Greece, Rome, and England, and a Pantheon for the use of schools—excellent little works in their way. Probably to avoid the suspicion which parents and teachers would entertain towards works written by one of his peculiar notions, he placed the name "James Baldwin" on the title pages. He is represented as having been a man of a calm temperament, and kind disposition.

The lady, whose life and writings are now to be noticed, used her talents in a very different manner. The books she sent forth to the world were on the subject of Christian education, or works of fiction calculated to assist the cause of virtue and religion. One was composed with the express object of furnishing an antidote to the poison so prevalent in the productions of Godwin.

Miss Elizabeth Hamilton, was born at Belfast, 25th July, 1758, and at six years of age went to live with her uncle, a Mr. Marshal, near Stirling. In 1772 the family removed to Ingram's Crook, near Bannockburn. Her brother, an officer in the suite of Warren Hastings, returned to England in 1786. The information he gave her about the East Indies, was afterwards turned to account in her "Letters of a Hindoo Rajah." His death in 1793, and that of her uncle a short time before, left her very lonely. In 1804, she undertook the education of a Scottish nobleman's daughters. She resigned her charge after six months, but continued to take considerable interest in the young ladies. It was for their improvement that she wrote the "Letters to the Daughters of a Nobleman." In 1812 she and her sister, Mrs. Blake, visited Ireland, and were very cordially received, especially at Bellevue, in Wicklow, the beautiful seat of Mr. Latouche. She died at Harrowgate, on the 23rd of July, 1816.

Her "Letters of a Hindoo Rajah" appeared in 1796; "Memoirs of Modern Philosophers," 1800; "Memoirs of Agrippina," 1804; "Cottagers of Glenburnie," 1808.

The "Modern Philosophers" was designed to counteract the mischievous influence of Mr. Godwin's books. No one now feels much interested about Godwin, though his spirit, according to Pythagoras, has passed into one of the Essay-and-Review worthies; so the novel has not retained the popularity of the Glenburnie chronicle. Yet the story is interesting, the sentiments and principles are just, the dialogues lively, and the characters well drawn and individualized. A low born villain with some tincture of education, a philosopher by profession, an ill-educated, but amiable young lady, a flighty, scampish librarian, and one of his subscribers, poor little ricketty Bridgetina, are the chief professors of the new philosophy. Biddy's mother, a clergyman's widow, has an exalted notion of her daughter's abilities, but, on the whole, would be rather inclined to abide by Christianity; and between these and the estimable people of the history, the interest of the story is very well maintained. It being out of the question to present an outline of the story we make an extract.

Poor Julia, the victim offered up on the altar devoted to the goddess of reason and the new philosophy, seemed doomed before her birth. Her mother had been—

> "A complete beauty: her features formed a model of the most perfect symmetry, which seemed never to have been discomposed by any impulsive motions of joy or grief, pain or pleasure. She not only attracted the notice of the gentlemen, but even escaped the envy of the ladies. With them she was a sweet girl, the sweetest girl in the world; as to beauty she was *quite a picture*.
>
> "Captain S. soon found the latter part of the encomium to be more literally true than he could have wished. She was at all times equally sweet and equally silent. She received every mark

> of his attention with the most enchanting smile, but smiled just as enchantingly when he forbore to take any notice of her."

The captain escapes for a few weeks on pretence of grouse shooting, and his brother in arms, Captain Delmond, walks off with the fair insensible to Gretna Green.

> "Though the heart of Captain S. received no very deep wound from the loss of his mistress, the imperious voice of honour demanded revenge. The honour of Delmond was no less forward to give satisfaction. They met by appointment, and after mutual salutations and declarations of perfect good will, took aim at each other's hearts and fired their pistols. The first shot missed but the second was more successful. It took effect on each; and each after receiving his adversary's ball declared that he was satisfied. The seconds interposed, and pronounced that nothing could be more gentleman-like than their whole behaviour."

The handsome villain, Vallatton, has some trouble with Julia, notwithstanding the defenceless state of her understanding. Her love of her father, and woman's innate modesty, shielded her for a time. Here are some of his arguments :—

> "'Dear, enchanting enthusiast,' cried Vallatton, 'you are forsooth indebted to this gentleman (her father), because in the hateful spirit of monopoly, he chose by despotic and artful means, to engross a pretty woman (her mother) to himself. . . . As for you, whatever he bestowed previous to his knowledge of your real worth, was a glaring proof of the most odious selfishness. Was it not because he believed himself your father that he thus provided for you? In what a contemptible light does philosophy teach us to view this prejudice! [I ought to prefer no human being to another because that being is my father, my wife, or my son, but because, for reasons which equally appeal to all understandings, that being is entitled to preference. In a state of equality it will be a question of no importance to know who is the parent of each individual child. It is aristocracy, self-love, and family pride that teach us to set a value upon it at present.]* And for this offspring of aristocratic prejudice, this selfish affection which your father had for you because you were his, and not the offspring of perhaps a worthier man, he is entitled to your duty and your gratitude! Mistaken Julia! exert your energies to conquer prejudices so unworthy of you.'"

Room cannot be afforded for the humorous passages scattered through the work; for Mr. Glib's abandonment of wife and library, and Biddy's desertion of her mother for a voyage to the Gonaquais Hottentots, discovered by Le Vaillant or the scribe who assumed his name, in order to live agreeably to nature and Mr. Godwin. We do not relish the treatment given by the authoress to the ridiculous and ill-favoured poor Bridgetina: she deserves pity rather than ridicule. However, there are no want of estimable, and, better still, interesting characters, through the meritorious and talented work, to secure the attention and sympathy of the mere novel reader.

"Anna St. Ives," and "Bryan Perdue," and other stories, by Holcroft, deserve mention for their homely, vigorous, old English, and well-connected incidents. Surely his was one of the most remarkable pursuits of knowledge under difficulties. He was born in 1745, and died in 1809. Son of a shoemaker and the mistress of a green stall, one of his earliest employments was the guidance of a fruit-laden ass through the country. From this he was changed, not promoted, to be an ostler at Newmarket, but joined his father at cobbling and making shoes after two years among the horses. In 1765 he proposed to teach youth at Liverpool; but within a twelvemonth, was again occupied with leather and waxed-ends. Even then he received five shillings for a column of essays from the Whitehall *Evening Post.* We find him next acting at the Dublin theatre and through the north of England on small salaries, till, in 1777, he found a patron in Richard Brinsley Sheridan. He was afterwards of sufficient importance to be the object of prosecution for French revolutionary sympathies. He never became a good actor, but produced stirring tales and successful dramas, one of which, "The Road to Ruin," is still occasionally performed.

Miss Cornelia E. Knight, whose

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* The portion in brackets is taken from the "Political Justice" of Godwin.

autobiography met with a kind reception from the journals during the past year, wrote "M. Flaminius," a tale of the time of ancient Rome, translated the "Roman Nights" of Signor Verri, and gave a continuation to "Rasselas." Our copy of "Dinarbas" is dated 1800, and is a good specimen of the typography of the time.

After a stirring season of adventures, Rasselas found a suitable bride, and Nekayah a suitable bridegroom. The massive gates securing the entrance to the happy valley were thrown open, and all the energies of the prince and his relatives directed towards the happiness of their people. The style of the great doctor is imitated here and there, but the heavy concluding triads of his sentences rather avoided. A few of Rasselas's parting words are presented:—

> "Youth will vanish, health will decay, beauty fade, and strength sink into imbecility; but if we have enjoyed their advantages, let us not say there is no good, because the good in this world is not permanent. None but the guilty are excluded from, at least, temporary happiness; and if he whose imagination is lively, and whose heart glows with sensibility, is more subject than others to poignant grief and maddening disappointment, surely he will confess that he has moments of ecstasy and consolatory reflection that repay him for all his sufferings."

There are few of the novels and romances that were popular in our father's days, more easily met than those of Dr. John Moore, together with his Continental sketches. They must, at one time, have possessed great popularity. It is to be supposed that the number of their present readers is small; yet they are well worth perusal for their graphic power, and the insight they give into the social and political state of France, Germany, Italy, and the Peninsula in his days. He was born at Stirling in 1730, and at the age of seventeen went, under the Duke of Cumberland, to the Low Countries, to learn his business practically as a military surgeon. About 1773 he accompanied the young Duke of Hamilton on a tour, and remained on the Continent several years. In 1779 he published his "Views of Society in France, Switzerland, and Germany;" in 1781, his "Views of Society in Italy;" in 1789, his "Zeluco, or Various Views of Human Nature;" in 1795, his "Dissertation on the French Revolution;" in 1796 appeared "Edward;" in 1800, "Mordaunt;" and in 1803, he died at Richmond, regretted much by his acquaintance, on account of his social virtues. Many subjects are introduced in these views of human nature and of human society on the Continent that would scarcely be allowed to appear in similar works of our day; for whether we are more virtuous than Dr. Moore's contemporaries or not, we are, at all events, more circumspect in our language.

The "Beggar Girl," by Mrs. Bennett, was once as popular as the "Children of the Abbey." She retained her popularity to a point of time within twenty years. There is considerable briskness, mostly of a rough pattern, in the style, united with ease of construction; and there is no lack of adventure while the beggar is making her way out of rags into satin. There was no small share of sentiment diffused through fictional literature before 1800; however, stories full of adventure and movement were the favourites, and, among them, translations from the French. We retain a very pleasing impression of one of these—"The Adventures of a Busy Body," by the Chevalier Mouhy. It had a succession of the most pleasant and exciting adventures, and, if our recollection is reliable, was entirely unobjectionable. Political or religious essays, weakly disguised under a narrative form, many of which have sat as incubi on library shelves and the window-stools of housekeepers' rooms during the last thirty years, would not be looked at by a publisher in the good old times of which we speak. Other comparisons in the two periods correspond. Those who now throng to hear a lecture on the necessity of revolt against a well-intentioned, popular government, or on the career, and genius, and blunders, and tender heart of poor Oliver Goldsmith, would have been witnessing a cock-fight or a bull-baiting, while Mrs. Bennett, in the year 1794, was penning the following proem to "Ellen, Countess of Castle Howell:"—

> **"Four hundred miles distant from home, family, and friends—a stranger in**

a country where she was literally taken in—her spirit broken, her health impaired, her little fortune sinking;—the unoffending victim of a party who forgot their character and manhood to combine against the sex they were born to protect;—her domestic peace and *dearest pride* totally destroyed; what wonder female fortitude should sink under such accumulated ills?—and that as a resource from mental derangement, she sought in the airy regions of fancy, any subject which, by diverting thought from 'self,' might sometimes afford a temporary oblivion of sorrow!"

Had the authoress of the "Beggar Girl" flourished some fifty years later, she would console herself by lugging her persecutors (including Mr. Bennett in all probability), into a spicy novel, or by giving public lectures on legal abuses, and moving the Lord Chancellor whenever he prepared to take his ease on his uncomfortable bench.

It would be a useless search at this hour, that of discovering the causes of her "big sorrow" and secret grief—secret to us, but not to her contemporaries, nor to Mr. A.K. Newman, Minerva Press, Leadenhall-street. That patron of undeveloped fictional genius held on till within the last score years, when he retired to take some rest at Gravesend, at the ripe age of four score. From all that we can learn, he was an estimable citizen, and possessed judgment in his peculiar walk. Remnants of his stock, done up in cloth to have a modern air, were sent to the great auction-rooms in Dublin, Edinburgh, and other large towns, previous to handing over his goodwill to his successor. At this day there is no representative of the old firm.

Mrs. Regina Maria Roche, we take for granted, was Irish by birth; the chief part of her life was spent in the county of Waterford. Of all her works, the "Children of the Abbey" alone has kept its ground among those publishers who decline acquaintance with copyright. Whatever the merits of her stories, they were not destitute of attractive titles, as will be evident from the subjoined list:—"The Vicar of Lansdowne," "The Maid of the Hamlet," 1793; "The Children of the Abbey," "Clermont," 1798; "The Nocturnal Visit," 1800; "The Discarded Son," "The Houses of Osma and Almeria," "The Monastery of St. Columb," 1812; "Trecothic Bower," 1813; "Castle Chapel," 1825; "Bridal of Dunamore," "Munster Cottage Boy," &c. The contents of some of these novels and romances were by no means so romantic as the titles would imply. There is considerable stir, and some humour in the "Castle Chapel." In the remote castle of St. Doulagh's, in Ulster, Aunt Agnes Flora Judith being troubled with the education of a nephew and niece, adopts the simple method recommended by Gall and Spurzheim. She finds that the cranium may be moulded in infancy into any desirable shape—one Indian tribe enveloping their brain in a sugar-loaf case, another in a cocoa-nut ditto, and an African race wearing their heads beneath their shoulders, on the authority of Othello, who ought to know—himself being a native of that region. These facts taken for granted, no more is necessary than to apply a metal cap to the child's head, leaving ample room and verge enough for the development of the desirable organs; none whatever for the budding of the baleful propensities. The young lady and gentleman are called in, and she addresses them:—

> . . . . "'Dear children, before I read the sublime system of Gall and Spurzheim, I fancied man a free agent, endued with powers to discriminate between good and evil; but left to his own choice, with a knowledge of the rewards or penalties attached to it. I find, however, from these great men, Gall and Spurzheim, the contrary to be the case. . . . Man is sent into the world with organs of volition, that propel him as they please, either to evil or to good, according to the organs that preponderate, so that he can have no will of his own; but just like an automaton, when wound up, performs certain evolutions whether he will or no. . . . . Happily, you are not *too* old for the evident remedy. All that remains to be done, ere I give orders for the metal caps, is to examine your craniums, in order to ascertain what bumps most require to be pressed on; the cutting off your hair, indeed, the close shaving of your heads will be necessary. Against this, I flatter myself, my dear children, your good sense will prevent your offering any objection.' . . . Eugene was nearly suffocated with laughter, while rage absolutely sparkled in the eyes of Grace at the thought."

Inveterate novel reader as we acknowledge ourselves to have been *in our youth*, we either did not or could not get through one of Francis Lathom's compositions; yet, whose romances were more welcome to the lazy, mindless devourers of fictional rubbish than his? He was a native of Norwich, and from 1799, when "Men and Manners" was published, to 1810, he had manufactured forty volumes at least. The latest of his stories that came under our notice are dated 1825. He had no power of presenting individual character—the language was bald and colourless, and the successive incidents and situations were frightfully unreal. He started a mystery at the beginning; and sending his men and women here and there, and making every new personage introduced tell his own story of unconnected adventures, and still tantalizing his unhappy clients with dark references to the grand secret, he spun out his three or four volumes, and the mystery cleared up at last was not worth a straw. We shall endeavour to give an outline of his "Midnight Bell."

Noble young hero's father is reported killed, and, as hero suspects, by his uncle. Hero's mother makes him take a solemn vow to revenge father's death. Hero hears a shriek in the night from mother's room. Mother rushes in next morning to *his* room, proclaims uncle's innocence, adjures him to fly away, and never look on her face again—the where she leaves to himself; and, with little money in his pocket, he quits his paternal halls, enlists as a common soldier, and when wars are over, gets work in a mine. Servant of gentleman visiting mine falls into a pit and is killed, that hero may get into gentleman's service. Meanwhile uncle disappears, mother dies by report, bell is heard to ring at midnight in S.W. tower, and no one is hardy enough to attempt entrance into castle yard or castle.

Hero now gets employment as sacristan in a nunnery (!), one of his duties being to hold the vessel of holy water to nuns and novices as they pass into church. Falls in love with novice; novice falls in love with him; finds out her antecedents, which are of this colour. Novice's mother native of Venice, her father, avaricious, wishes her to marry one man, she wishes to be married to another, this other happens to be hero's uncle in days past—is obliged to marry man she does not like—is very faithful to her vows—virtuous altogether; but visits man she likes at *her aunt's*. Father sets on husband to waylay and kill lover. He makes the attempt, but dangerously wounds senator's son instead, and is obliged to fly. Unhappy wife escapes from unnatural parent's power in man's attire; gains the convent, is sheltered by the abbess, gives birth to future novice, and dies.

New hero and novice prevail on chaplain of convent to unite them in holy marriage, and this he does after a little hesitation. They leave convent, and he becomes a fisherman. Neighbouring good Baron's wicked nephew assails married novice's virtue in vain—gets ruffians to carry her away to an old ruin—regular robbers' hold; prepares to follow her after a day or so; virtuous Baron spoken to by hero, lays wicked nephew by heels; he is secured at home, and poor young wife secured in robbers' hold.

Meanwhile novice's father has fled to Paris, after assigning property to wicked father-in-law in trust, but who never trusts a penny of it out of sight. Exile lives by gambling; is taken up as Italian spy, lodged in Bastile, and undergoes an examination once in two or three years; gets a taste of question by torture on one occasion; makes escape to Germany, and as one of the robbers' gang, recognises daughter in married novice. Married novice and father are escaping, but intercepted by wicked nephew, who has got out of bondage; hero appears when all is on point of being lost, and kills wicked nephew. Now hero, wife, and father to wife, approach hero's natal castle, long closed, and terrible with midnight sounding bell. Hero and follower try the adventure. Hero returns next morning to wife and father-in-law; has seen ghost of mother, who reproached him with direful looks for disobeying command. Hero falls into fever; father-in-law gets into castle, finds mother alive. Mother had suspected uncle long ago of killing husband, and, therefore, had exhorted hero to revenge his death; and when son had heard shriek from mother's room, she had just stabbed husband to the heart, mistaking him for uncle. Hence, order to son to quit castle, and never see her again (she might, however, have furnished him with travelling expenses), and hence, services for slain husband's soul every night, and clang of bell, to summon monks of neighbouring convent to perform ceremony.

If we multiply Mr. Lathom's forty volumes by the thousand and forty novel writers who flourished, vegetated rather, along with him, and imagine, that the novel-reading public had to devour all that mess, dreadful their destiny would have been. But the Misses Porter had begun to contribute some healthier additions to the meal, in 1793, and Miss Edgeworth some more healthy still in 1798, and others followed their example;.and thus was gradually pushed aside the unhealthy mass of mental diet, till Sir Walter Scott in 1814, joined the givers of the feast, and spread satisfaction and happiness over the countenances of all who paid for, or were invited to the entertainment.

To every one who aspires to hold pleasant communication with the souls of myriads of his fellow-beings through the medium of novel or romance, conceived with mental pain, and perfected with watchings and long labours, it may be of service to reflect on the now forgotten productions of thousands, who exercised their imaginative powers for the same purpose, did only negative good at best, and if their uncalled-for tasks were not fulfilled in accordance with the spirit of Christian morality, did absolute harm to the imaginative or unsteady youth whom they addressed, always so fond of escaping from the dusty, harsh ways of real life to the meadows, river sides, and landscape gardens of the land of romance. It is one thing to lose one's cares, and relax our strained thoughts, out of those hours that should be devoted to genuine labour of mind or body; but it is a different and a dismal thing, to be following with an excited imagination the wild and erroneous flights of the imagination of another, when mind or body should be occupied in some work of duty.

FORGOTTEN NOVELS.

PART II.

OUR object in reviving the memory of those works of imagination that were popular in the couple of generations preceding our own, was explained in the introduction to the former part of this paper. The order in which we take up the subjects is determined for the most part by the dates of the different works noticed, except when a work turns up that was accidentally left out. It will be seen that the earlier novels and romances consisted chiefly of unconnected adventures, as the first one on our present list. Then by degrees more care was taken with the development of character and the careful construction of what the French denominate the *charpente*—the framework. The author of "Ivanhoe" set the world agog on the subject of historic romance, and we were stuffed with all sorts of dry information as to how herrings were sold per dozen in any given reign, and the exact fashion of the doublets, ruffs, russet boots, &c., that disguised dead and gone personages of fame.

Such was the impatience with which Continental readers were devoured when a new production of the author of "Waverley" was expected, that on one occasion, when it was feared no fresh romance would be in time to be translated for the Leipzig Fair, Herr Haro Hæring, who masqueraded under the name of Willibald Alexis, wrote out, in an amazingly short time, "Walladmor, a Welsh Romance," and published it as a translation from Sir Walter Scott. The deception extended even to England, where an English version of the German version of Scott's supposed English was published, but never had the trouble of preparing itself for a second edition. Monsieur Lacroix (Bibliophile Jacob) wrote his "Soirées with Walter Scott," but was easily detected by his overstepping those bounds established by modesty and respect for religion, beyond which the author of "Waverley" had no desire to pass.

One of the best of these pseudo versions from Scott was "Aymé Verd," the author of which is unknown to us by name. The scene of the story is the south-east of France, and the time the era of the Reformation. There is no scruple about exhibiting the workings of the most violent passions (no immoralities, however, described or implied), and the balance is very fairly kept between the Roman Catholics and the Reformed party. There is a most affecting episode of the fate of a poor bookseller who has become an itinerant preacher, and is working out his purpose with abundant zeal, but little discretion. The writer was probably a Roman Catholic; but his picture of the sufferings of the poor enthusiast, and his wretched wife and children, inflicted by an embittered man of power of the opposing party, is most affecting. The antiquarian and social pictures are as true as those of German Hæring or Danish Ingeman, and the story nearly as interesting as "Old Mortality."

So many pictures of past times were poured upon the world, painted on hard wood and cast iron, with colours compounded of saw and brick dust, lampblack and verdigris, that at last the hand of the frequenter of a circulating library would shrink from the bare touch of one of the daubs. The author of the "Constable of the Tower" is the only one whose resolution has not given way before the openly expressed wishes of his patrons. He gives an airing still to certain lay figures, whom he is pleased to nickname Bluff King Hal, Queen Catharine Parr, and the Protector Somerset, and dresses them in as exact conformity to the costume of the sixteenth century, as if the late Madame Tussaud had been the artist.

These imitators of the inimitable centered the entire interest of their stories on a historic name or event; not remarking that some imaginary character in every one of the "Waverley" novels occupied the reader's chief sympathy. Foreign romancers sinned even more in this respect than our own English-speaking Celts and Saxons. Ingeman, a most painstaking Dane in the historic romance line, not only wrote according to this system, but even took great pains to defend the propriety of the proceeding. The author of "Walladmor" adopted Mr. Ingeman's principles, and wrote in accordance therewith "The Burgomaster of Berlin," "Cabanis, a Tale of the Seven Years' War," and other dry crusts of history rubbed over with treacle. Nothing can be more satisfactory to the antiquary or the archæologist, than his minute pictures of the social state of old Germany in woodland, schloss, and burgh, and the relations, antagonistic or friendly, in which the nobles, burghers, and peasants, stood to each other. Jonathan Oldbuck would treasure the "Burgomaster" for its antiquarian details; but the number of genuine Oldbucks is small, and these art-productions of the hard wood and cast iron type are now covered with dust, and no mere lover of novelty lets his eye rest on them for a moment.

Some fault was found with our former article for the omission of the "Spiritual Quixote" and its author. We are glad of an opportunity to repair our fault.

This novel was published in the year 1773. Its object was to excite contempt for the practices of the Methodist Preachers and their chief, Mr. Whitfield, and to show that there was no necessity for their forming a sect apart, as all the good arising from their zeal for the salvation of their fellow-creatures was procurable within the pale of the Establishment. A common practice with writers of controversial novels is to represent the professors of the belief or practice attacked as vicious or unworthy characters or hypocrites. The Rev. Richard Graves does nothing of the kind. He honours the unselfish zeal of Messrs. Wesley and Whitfield; and the hero who, unlicensed, spends his summer in a preaching excursion, is an accomplished, learned, and amiable character. The polemical matter occupies but a small portion of the work. Mr. Wildgoose, at the end, is undeceived as to his non-vocation with little difficulty—Miss Townsend, who is insensible to the merits of the new light, having something to do with his change.

The readers of "Don Quixote" find their attention much more occupied with the humours of the various personages, the succession of diverting adventures, and the amiable traits of the hero's character, than with the absurdities of his monomania. The same may be said of the book under notice. One ludicrous or interesting adventure treads on the heels of another, and many real occurrences of the time are brought forward in episodes. The book furnishes a striking illustration of the disparity of taste of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Expressions, which would now be scarcely tolerated by the readers of *Reynolds's Miscellany*, were used by the well-meaning and reverend author without the slightest suspicion of any thing incorrect in his proceedings. Admirers of Greek sculpture will recollect an epithet applied to a certain graceful statue, and admirers of the brave old Puritan divine, Baxter, have heard of the strange title attached to one of his books. The key-note in these two names is heard a score of times through the "Adventures of Mr. Wildgoose."

The author was born at Mickleton, in Gloucestershire, May 4, 1715. At sixteen years of age he enjoyed the rank of scholar in Pembroke College, Oxford. About this time he formed an acquaintance with Shenstone, and a kindly intercourse continued between them till the death of the poet. His obtaining a curacy near Oxford, his marriage with an amiable young lady at whose father's house he lodged, and other circumstances of his life, are supposed to be shadowed forth in the history of Mr. Rivers in the work under notice.

Somewhere about 1750 he became rector of Claverton, and in 1768 he published the first of a score of works, including "Passages in the Life of Shenstone," and translations. In his various pieces he succeeded in imparting information and affording harmless amusement. He was distinguished by amiable manners and benevolence of character, and lived to the advanced age of ninety.

As a specimen of the author's agreeable style, we shall introduce Jeremiah Tugwell, an honest cobbler, whom Mr. Wildgoose takes with him by way of humble brother, when he sets forth on his preaching excursion.

"Jeremiah Tugwell, then, or Tagwell, or Tackwell (for learning having been at a low ebb in the family, the orthography is somewhat dubious)—nay, a conceited fellow in the village who pretended to etymology, said it ought to have been written Tugwool, and that 'wool' was put for 'sheep,' and sheep for 'mutton' by a synecdoche; so that the true meaning of the name, according to his counsel, was 'Tugmutton.' But I value at a nutshell these etymologies, which endeavour to elicit a significant meaning from every family name, the originals of which are infinitely uncertain. . . . . . .

"Jerry was fond of books, but as he did not trouble himself with the niceties of chronology or geography, he particularly affected the 'Seven Champions of Christendom,' who are said by the historian to have sprung up soon after the destruction of Troy—that is, some thousand years before Christ was born, and one of them to have ridden on horseback from Sicily through Cappadocia, Tartary, the Isle of Cyprus, &c., the direct road to Jerusalem."

Mr. Wildgoose choosing to appear without the universal wig of his time, Miss Townsend finds occasion to tax him with singularity.

"'Lord, Mr. Wildgoose!' says she, 'what makes you go about in that frightful hair of yours? I wonder you do not wear a wig as other gentlemen do.' 'Pray, madam, why don't you like my hair?' 'Oh, frightful!' says she; ''tis so ungenteel—so unlike other people.' 'I would choose to be unlike a great part of the world in their vain fashions and idle customs; but I am sorry that any thing should be thought ungenteel that is natural, convenient, and, I think, becoming. If you don't think so, young lady, I am afraid it is owing to mere prejudice and force of custom.' 'Custom!' says Miss Townsend; 'why custom or fashion is every thing in regard to dress.' 'I dare say it is custom that makes you think this great hoop of yours very genteel and very becoming; and yet in the opinion of many people of the best taste nothing can be more monstrous or more unnatural than hoop-petticoats are; and I dare say we shall live to see these Gothic ornaments banished from the world.' 'What! hoops go out of fashion. Lord, what a creature should I be without my hoop!'"*

Mr. Wildgoose, following Mr. Whitfield's style, abuses such expressions as "carrying lambs in his bosom," "he shall embrace them," "streams of joy," "feasts of fat things," "milk, honey, marrow, and fatness," "hidden treasures, gold, silver, and jewels, kingdoms, crowns, and sceptres," for the sake of drawing over the lewd, the luxurious, and the covetous. This is the general result.

"By this soothing eloquence, and the earnestness of his manner, Wildgoose softened those hearts which for some years had resisted the admonitions of friends and the suggestions of conscience, and made many converts to religion—at least he made them so as long as the brightness of those similes continued to glow in their imaginations. But their affections only being moved, and their understandings not being enlightened, nor their reason convinced, too many of them soon relapsed into their former dissolute courses."

To our youngsters who have no experience except of the sensation fictions of Charles Reade, Wilkie Collins, and Sir Edward Bulwer Litton, the perusal of "The Spiritual Quixote" would be like a tumbler of water-gruel after a glass of champagne. The framework of the story is nothing but a series of travelling adventures in the style of Don Quixote, Sir Launcelot Greaves, and Joseph Andrews, intermixed with a thousand and one autobiographies of the characters met on the way. Any episode in which Sancho Panza falls out with a carrier, and they resort to fisticuffs, and draw the Don, one or two gentlemen lookers-on, and a pair of troopers of the holy brotherhood into the *melée*, and a sudden noise stops the hands of all the combatants, will give a good idea of the unconnected materials of the work. There is a glaring copy of the story of Ruth, and of Thompson's "Lovely Young Lavinia," towards the end of the book. Let no paterfamilias purchase a chance copy (the last edition, as we believe, being Walker's 24mo, 1816), for the purpose of reading it aloud to his young sons and daughters: he would soon be obliged to make pauses very causative of ear-cocking on the part of Master Jack and Miss Jean. Notwithstanding, the book is an excellent book, and presents many happy magic-lantern scenes of English society a hundred years past.

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* This was written in 1773. A few years afterwards the ladies discarded the nuisance. If women were always under the influence of good taste in the article of dress, men would be too much their slaves. So hoops, gigot-sleeves, têtes, very large and very small bonnets, though evils in themselves, stand in the way of the much greater evil above named.

At stated periods all the world combines against the comfort or good name of some devoted individual, or he is fully persuaded of the fact, which comes exactly to the same thing. Sir Egerton Brydges thus prefaces the second volume of "Arthur Fitz-Albini."

> "On the evening of the 23rd of December, 1797, the writer of these memoirs sits down to commence his second volume. . . . His whole life has been for the most part nothing but a series of disappointments. . . . But he must be forgiven for being proud in his own defence—a pride which envy, malignity, intrigue, oppression, and perfidy will never shake.
>
> "It is with a calm courage, with a degree of bold indifference, like that which accompanies despair, that he assumes his pen . . for the opportunity of discharging his mind of some of those reflections which perpetual observation and bitter experience have taught him. . . .
>
> "Far indeed is the author of these pages from such expectations (literary celebrity, to wit). With no talents for popularity, with no manners of general conciliation, with no pliancy to the affectations of fashion, with no submission in sentiment to the cant of the day, how can he expect applause? . . . He had ambition once; and he may have it again if he sees there is room for the occupations which he loves. But to those who cannot join the clamours of faction it seems a period little consonant to a manly spirit.
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> "Too proud to solicit a seat as the dependent of ministers or great men,—too poor to carry on expensive and uncertain contests against Indian extortion or the usurious plenty of loan-contracting bankers, he sees the most stupid, the most ignorant, and the most profligate of mankind, who can bribe thousands of drunken voters, and pay without ruin the prodigality and fraudulent charges of tavern-keepers and interested agents, step over his head with brutal insolence, while he is left in the shades of a silent retreat to sooth his indignation by the flashes of imagery and sentiment that now and then break in upon its darkness."

After a glance at the conduct of the story, the reader is permitted to use his own judgment on the subject of Sir Samuel Egerton Brydges' qualifications for the composition of a good novel.

The hero, a sensitive and talented young nobleman, wishes to get into Parliament, but the estate is deeply mortgaged, and his father cannot yield to his wishes. However, he does not explain the wherefore, and the chagrined young gentleman can only console himself by a solitary ramble among his paternal woods, and the composition of a sonnet. His father recommends an alliance matrimonial with a certain Miss Packman, as rich as a Jew, but he inclines to the gentle-blooded but very poor Miss St. Leger. A wicked aunt of hers most unaccountably sets her chair next his at table, raises jealousy and wrath against her and him in the minds of Miss Packman and her father, and worries her into consumption with ill usage. Arthur loses father and mother on one day—is almost bereft of reason—recovers it by a solitary walk and the composition of a poem—is again driven into despair by suspicions of Miss St. Leger's falsehood, while she, by means of a family pedigree, is securing an estate for him and herself. While seeking relief by a wooded walk and a new sonnet, he comes to the knowledge of her loyalty on reading clandestinely a letter not intended for his eye. She is sinking in rapid consumption through his suspicions, her aunt's bad treatment, and her own researches through legal documents, when—*Io triumphe!* all is won, estate cleared of debt, and a happy married life is before them. On the wedding day diabolical aunt rushes in and assails her with such a virulent torrent of abuse, that the checked demon of consumption resumes his gallop; she is done to death, and he loses his reason.

The moral of the tale is—there is no virtue extant except amongst the titled of the land;—all merchants, government contractors, and Indian nabobs, are selfish ill-bred rogues, and all lawyers unmitigated scoundrels. Add Sir Egerton Brydges' and Charles Dickens' systems as to the comparative worth of the upper and lower classes, and divide the result by two for an approximation to the truth. In justice to the memory of the noble author, a specimen of his poetry is subjoined. Miss St. Leger *cecinit.*

"Ye who beneath these mouldering heaps have found
Rest from the sorrows of humanity,
I come to keep my vigils on the ground
Where I, too, soon at peace with you shall be.
Then when this throbbing heart has ceased to beat,
And lifeless lies this weak and trembling frame,
Malice itself perchance may not repeat
The cruel sounds that now assail my name.
With flowing tears upon the turf I bend,
Beneath whose shade my ashes will decay,
And thus I cry, 'Fresh flowers your perfumes lend
To the lone gales that o'er my grave will play!
And thus ye breezes, in the solemn tone
Of calm and heaven-wrapt melancholy moan!'"

Sir Samuel Egerton Brydges was born at Wooton, in Kent, November 30, A.D. 1762, was a student at Cambridge, 1780, in the Middle Temple, 1782, and was called to the bar in 1787. His sonnets appeared in 1785. On the death of the Duke of Chandos in 1790, he urged his brother to assert his claim to the title. The suit kept the courts occupied till 1803, when it was decided against him. In 1810 he removed to Lee Priory, in Kent, his son's residence, and thence issued some of his productions from a private printing press. He represented Maidstone in Parliament from 1811 to 1818, having obtained a patent of baronetcy in 1814. On losing his seat in the House of Commons he emigrated to Switzerland, and lived at Compagne, near Geneva, till his death, which took place September 8, 1837. His ill success in the suit for a title was long a subject of mortification to him; he always styled himself Baron Chandos *per legem terræ.* Among his two dozen works, embracing many volumes, are "Mary de Clifford," 1792; the work here noticed, 1798; "Le Forester," 1802; "Censura Literaria," 10 vols., 1805-9; "Coningsby," 1819; "Hall of Hellingsly," 1821; "Letters on the Genius of Lord Byron," 1822; "Recollections of Foreign Travel," 1825; "Autobiography and Recollections," 1834.

In 1804 Mrs. Opie published her novel of "Adeline Mowbray, or Mother and Daughter." In it she united her efforts to those of Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton in the "Modern Philosophers," to show the results of Godwin's theory respecting the folly and tyranny of the institution of marriage when reduced to practice. She probably felt that a picture of civilized society, where matrimonial obligations were entirely disregarded, would be altogether unfit for exhibition. So she took in hand only one victim—a talented, amiable, virtuously-disposed young lady, whose education was sadly neglected, and into whose hands had fallen an eloquently-written work of the Godwin school, whose appearance was to banish the immoral custom of marriage from the golden age that was to succeed the publication of the works of Tom Payne and the inauguration of the Goddess of Reason. This poor damsel is driven by the force of circumstances, and the logic of *Mr. Glenmurray's* book, to live with him as his mistress. The unfortunate philosopher, still convinced of the soundness of his theory, but seeing the suffering and disgrace it has inflicted upon his loved victim, and the probable misery it will inflict on their offspring, is urgent with her to submit to the afflicting ceremony, but in vain: she is more convinced of the soundness of his theory than himself. Mrs. Opie was certainly under the influence of religion; but if her fair readers are dissuaded from following the example of poor Adeline, it must be from the contemplation of her punishment by all her acquaintance, not from motives drawn from the principles of religion. The evil treatment she receives from both the male and female sections of society, though different in kind, is so excessive, that we are much rather disposed to feel pity for her sufferings than dislike for her erroneous opinions. So when the youth or maiden of unsteady principles comes to the end of the third volume, he or she may say, "I see by this most interesting and harrowing tale that it is not expedient for two ardent but virtuous lovers to commence housekeeping without resorting in the first instance to the unholy office of the registrar; but how could the world possibly be worse if every attached couple in the kingdom followed the example of the pure-minded and constant Glenmurray and

Adeline?" The talented and estimable authoress commenced with the best intentions, but she suffered the impulses of human sympathy to influence her too much, and lost sight of her object as the work proceeded.

Mrs. Opie's writings are not destitute of humour, but they are more distinguished by a spirit of earnestness and feeling: she inflicts no high-flown sentimentality on her readers. She found life what we all find it, a very serious concern, and so she has represented it.

Adeline's mother was early left a widow. When she had time for reading, she selected abstruse speculations. Both before and after marriage she spent little time in looking after her domestic affairs, and when she had not a book before her she was lost in reverie.

> "While she was trying to understand a metaphysical question on the mechanism of the human mind, or what constituted the true nature of virtue, she suffered day after day to pass in the culpable neglect of positive duties; and while imagining systems for the good of society and the furtherance of general philanthropy, she allowed individual suffering in her neighbourhood to pass unobserved and unrelieved. While professing her unbounded love for the great family of the world, she suffered her own family to pine under the consciousness of her neglect. . . .
>
> "Now it was judged right that she (Adeline) should learn nothing, and now that she should learn every thing. Now her graceful form and well-turned limbs were to be freed from any bandage, and any clothing save what decency required, and now they were to be tortured by stiff stays, and fettered by the stocks and the backboard.
>
> "All Mrs. Mowbray's ambition had settled in one point, one passion, and that was EDUCATION. . . . She anticipated, with great satisfaction, the moment when she should be held up as a pattern of imitation to mothers, and be prevailed on, though with graceful reluctance, to publish her system, without a name, for the benefit of society. But the execution of her good intentions was continually delayed by her habits of abstraction and reverie. After having arranged over night the tasks of Adeline for the next day,—lost in some new speculations for the good of her child, she would lie in bed all the morning, exposing that child to the dangers of idleness."

For a while Adeline's dinner consisted of pudding without butter, and potatoes without salt; but while she was taking her walk, her mother thought it not unfit to treat herself to luxurious fare. Finding the young lady thriving, and showing by her healthy looks the good effect of simple and spare diet, she began one day to praise her good system in presence of Adeline. She, however, blushed, hung her head, and acknowledged that the servants obliged her every evening to take some of the good fare laid by from her mother's repast.

Adeline was initiated by her grandmother into the mysteries of ruling a household; and while Mrs. Mowbray was still only moulding her materials into some educational shape, her daughter's education, such as it was, came to a finish. The mother enjoyed the beauty of Glenmurray's style without the slightest notion of seeing his anti-matrimonial scheme adopted by any of her friends; but poor Adeline took it all for gospel. The above extract will remove any surprise from the reader's mind that she should take the step she did, unaware, as her training had left her, of the exact limits of right and wrong, or the authoritative teaching of religion.

Amelia Alderson was born at Norwich, November 12, 1769. On the death of her mother in 1784, she succeeded to the government of her father's household, and began to take much interest in the discussion of metaphysics and French politics. She became the wife of Mr. Opie, the painter, in 1798, and published "Father and Daughter" in 1801. "Adeline Mowbray" appeared in 1804, and "Simple Tales" in 1805. She returned to her father's house in Norwich on the death of her husband in 1807. In 1809 she published Mr. Opie's "Lectures on Painting." In 1812 appeared "Temper;" in 1813, "Romances of Real Life;" in 1816, "Valentine's Eve;" in 1818, "Tales of the Heart;" in 1822, "Madeline;" and "Illustrations of Lying" in 1825. Her religious views gradually modified since 1815, and in 1825 she joined the Society of Friends with her father's consent. In 1835 she visited Switzerland and other Continental countries, and published an account of her tour in *Tait's Magazine* in 1840. Her death occurred on December 2, 1853, when she was upwards of eighty-four years of age.

In 1814, was published by T. Dick, of High-street, Edinburgh, "The Saxon and the Gael, or the Northern Metropolis," as good a novel as the best of Galt's, and very little inferior to one of Miss Ferrier's. The authoress endeavoured to hold the balance fairly between Celt and Saxon; but though the genuine Irish or Erse idiom is put in the mouths of the Highland adherents, still, we guess from the spirit that pervades the work, that she was a lowland lady. *Tuch in Deorist* is made in one place to do duty for "*Deoch an Dorus*"—"the drink at the door"—the stirrup-cup. A few misconceptions of this kind deprive us of the pleasure of hailing the talented writer as of Gaelic race.

The Earl of Glenlara has pride enough for two Highland chiefs, but his property consists only of an old castle and some square miles of heath and rock. Mr. Winpenny, the eminent distiller, is about as polished in manner, and as well informed in literary matters as his head drayman; but his daughter Jane is in education and disposition a lady. Glenlara's son, Angus, desires Jane Winpenny for wife. Jane is not insensible to the merits of the young nobleman; but the stately Earl is disgusted with the purse-proud, coarse manners of the distiller, and the sensitive daughter will not enter a family where her father would be an object of ridicule or scorn. Lady Rosabelle, Glenlara's eldest daughter, is courted by Lieutenant Murray, R.N. No objection to this match but the dangerous profession of the pretendant. Lord Macallan, her eldest brother, falls into bad courses, endangers his own life and the credit of his family, and nearly prevents the union of Angus and Jane. Lady Sybella, her younger sister, nearly falls into the power of Count Volage, attached to the little French Court at Holyrood. Along with the interesting drama in which these characters play their parts, we have Lord Ego (the Earl of Buchan), so well depicted by poor Gillies and our worthy ex-lessee, Mr. Cole; Lady Gawky, as devoted to the law courts as Mrs. Winter or Miss Flyte; the volatile, worthless Miss Scott, who so feelingly laments her incapability of blushing; and the rough-mannered, but kind-hearted, Dr. Leech. The author of "Rab and his Friends" could not have been a physician in full practice at the time; perhaps it was his father. Morag, the devoted housekeeper, and Donald, the equally devoted family piper, have a good deal to say in the course of the tale. He sends her news of the city life, and she sends despatches to him from the far mountains. Then we have the entrée of some fashionable assemblies of Auld Reekie, get tickets to witness Mrs. Siddons' performance in *Venice Preserved*, and go out on Hogmany (New Year's Eve) at midnight, with our bottle and glass, and visit all our acquaintance. But we must give a glimpse of the interior of Glenlara. The Earl was looking in an uncomfortable state of mind through the narrow window of his dining-hall on the rainy, dreary landscape, and

"The drawling notes of old Donald's bagpipe, who in time of dinner always paced the entrance-hall, blowing his favourite instrument, was all that was heard during the unsocial repast. But the music suddenly stopped. though in the middle of 'Glenlara's Gathering,' and Donald was heard to exclaim, 'Och, Heavenly Father! what do I see! the banner of the family fallen down, and rent into a thousand pieces.' The face of the Earl became deadly pale, though he neither moved nor stirred.

"'Out of my sight, disgrace to your clan!' continued Donald; 'it was only such as yourself could lay your cursed hands upon it.'

"'Indeed, and it was myself, sure enough,' replied the sharp voice of Lady Sybella's maid; 'and I would not deny it though my Lord himself were to face me for it. And where, I wonder, was the harm of taking it to stuff Lady Sybella's window, which is all broken, as you know yourself, and her dying of the tooth-ache since the Christmas, the darling creature.'

"The Earl groaned, and hid his face in his hands. . . . . The anger of Donald had now subsided into grief, and he alternately bewailed himself and apostrophized the tattered banner. 'You, who was the pride and joy of my heart,' said he, turning over the fragments, 'hanging in the hall hundreds and hundreds of years. Well might I have known evil was come to the house of Macallan. My poor Angus! But then the tooth-ache, the darling! And I am sure it will grieve her own warm heart as much as mine, if that be possible.'"

Here is a glimpse of the Earl's tenants, to whom he was an indulgent, but unimproving landlord.

> "Their rents had never been advanced, no family had emigrated, and in all the pride of feudal and hereditary idleness, they reared a fragile hut of turf or dry stone, without door, window, or chimney; cultivated a little patch of land for barley and potatoes, which they divided and subdivided among swarms of children and grandchildren, till scarce an acre was left to themselves, and dragged out life in contented wretchedness.
>
> "The cold air, rain, and snow, blew through the unglazed holes left for the admission of light and the escape of the smoke, 'but they were just used to it.' The hut was darkened with thick smoke: 'Shift the straw to the other side.' If that produced no good effect certain consolation was found in the admirable adage: 'Well, there's no reek in the lark's nest this cold day.' If any improvement in the mode of agriculture was suggested, 'it was not worth *their while* to change for all their time of this world."

Mr. Winpenny is very doubtful of making a success when invited to dinner at Glenlara Lodge. Jane overhears him rehearsing his opening speech—

> "A cold afternoon, please your lordship. A little of the barley-bree wadna be amiss, but aiblins ye ne'er heard o' the joke of the highlandman and the gauger. I'll no be a crack o' tellin it: he, he!"

However, when he comes before the awful Earl, he can only get out the instinctive—"A' meat hale, mony braw thanks!" and is altogether stranded during the dreadful half hour before dinner. A beautiful painting of a sleeping Venus being brought under his notice, he finds fault with her want of thought. "If I war to lie down in my clothes like that gentlewoman, it wad set me a-wheezin' for a month."

At dinner he says to the Earl, "Ye see, I mak nae mou's wi' ye, my lord. I cut an cum again, and mak' my father's son welcome" (the Earl, all the while, wishing his father's son at the bottom of one of his own vats); praised everything to show his "discretion;" ate everything, and talked about everything to show his breeding; emptied a small dish of expensive peas into his plate, saying as his teeth were not as good as they had been, he would venture on the "pickle pizz;" and then troubled "Maister Angus for a priein' o' the bubbley-jock." The Earl's silent rage at these proceedings, and Jane's chagrin, break off any project of union of the families for the time.

In Mr. Cole's account of his dramatic experiences of Edinburgh, he relates how the Earl of Elgin, the "Lord Ego" of the story, wrote his own address legibly on a large card, placed it on his protegé's chimney-piece, and informed him that his (Mr. Cole's) fortune was made by that simple arrangement. It is with regret that we can make no room for good Doctor Leech's visits among the thriftless poor, so sparing of fresh water and fresh air, and other circumstances so racy of the Northern metropolis. We have looked over no Scottish work of fiction, after Scott's and Miss Ferrier's, that have interested us so much as the "Saxon and the Gael."

Observations on the fictions of Maria Edgeworth do not come within the design of this paper, as it is to be hoped that the day is very distant when they may be classed among "Forgotten Novels." In some of her earlier ones there is the evident trace of her father's hand in the texture of the story, as we suspect is the case in the quotation which we cannot refuse ourselves the pleasure of making. Lady Delacour is recounting her strange, ill-regulated career to her protegée, Belinda Portman, and has arrived at the duel which she had nearly fought with "odious Mrs. Luttridge," principals and seconds clad in male attire.

> "I had scarcely discharged my pistol when we heard a loud shout on the other side of the barn, and a crowd came pouring down the lane with rakes and pitchforks in their hands. The untutored sense of propriety among these rustics was so shocked at the idea of a duel fought by women in men's clothes, that I verily believe they would have thrown us into the river with all their hearts—stupid blockheads! They would not have been half so much scandalized if we had boxed in petticoats. The want of these petticoats had nearly proved our destruction, or at least our disgrace. A peeress after being ducked could never have held her head above water again with any grace. The mob had just

closed round us, crying 'shame, shame! duck 'em, duck 'em, gentle or simple!' when their attention was suddenly turned towards a person who was driving up the lane a large herd of squeaking, grunting pigs. He was clad in splendid regimentals, and armed with a long pole, to the end of which hung a bladder. His pigs were frightened, and the driver in regimentals could with difficulty make his voice heard. At last he was understood to say that a bet of a hundred guineas depended upon his keeping these pigs ahead of a flock of turkeys that were following them, and he begged the mob to give him and his pigs fair play. The mob were in raptures. Harriet Freke (Lady Delacour's second) shouted in French our distress, and the cause of it, to Clarence (the driver). He was, as I suppose you have discovered long ago, that cleverest young man in England, who had written on the propriety and necessity of female duelling. He answered Harriet in French, 'To attempt your rescue by force would be vain—but I will do better—I will make a diversion in your favour.' Addressing himself to the sturdy fellow who held me in custody, he exclaimed, 'Huzza, my boys! Old England for ever! Yonder comes a Frenchman with a flock of turkies. My pigs will beat them for a hundred guineas. Old England for ever, huzza!'

"As he spoke the French officer appeared at the turn of the lane, his turkeys half flying, half hobbling up the road before him. The Frenchman waved a red streamer over their heads; Clarence shook his pole, from the top of which hung a bladder full of beans. The pigs grunted, the turkeys gobbled, and the mob shouted, eager for the fame of old England. The French officer was followed with groans and hisses. So great was the zeal of the patriots, that the pleasure of ducking the female duelists was forgotten in the general enthusiasm. All eyes and hearts were intent on the race, and now the turkeys got foremost, and now the pigs. But when we came within sight of the horse-pond, I heard one fellow cry, 'Don't forget the ducking!' How I trembled! but our knight shouted to his followers: 'For the love of Old England, my brave boys, keep between my pigs and the pond. If our pigs see the water they'll run to it, and England's undone.'

"The whole fury of the mob was by this speech conducted away from us. Our general shook the rattling bladder in triumph over the heads of the swinish multitude, as we followed in perfect security in his train into the town.

"Men, women, and children crowded to the windows and doors. 'Retreat into the first place you can,' whispered Clarence to us—we were close to him. Harriet pushed her way into a milliner's shop, but a frightened pig turned back suddenly and almost threw me down. Clarence Hervey caught me, and favoured my retreat into the shop, but poor Clarence lost his bet by his gallantry. While he was manœuvring in my favour the turkeys got several yards ahead of the pigs, and reaching the market-place first, won the race.

"The French officer found great difficulty in getting safe out of the town; but Clarence represented that he was a prisoner on his parole, and that it would be unlike Englishmen to insult a prisoner. So he got off in safety, and they both dined at the house of General Y——, and entertained a large party with an account of this adventure."

If any of our readers are so misguided in taste, or so little favoured by that goddess who presides over circulating libraries, as not to have yet made acquaintance with Lady Delacour, Mrs. Beaumont, queen of manœuvring ladies, Soft Simon, Corney, king of the Black Islands, Terence O'Fay, and the ennui-ridden Earl of Glenthorn, let him or her now make up for lost time. Blest as the immortal gods will he be while residing on his Black Island with good king Corney, the ingenious, shift-making, kindhearted ruler, who was fonder of talking of his power and privileges than of using them, and whose greatest punishment for an ill-doing islander was banishing him to the neighbouring continent of Ireland.

Admirers of the genius, sound judgment, and kind disposition of Miss Edgeworth will be pleased to learn these few particulars concerning her. She was born at Hare Hatch, near Reading, January 1, 1767. Her mother was the first of the five wives of Richard Lovell Edgeworth, to the last four of whom she acted the part of a provident elder sister, and most of whose children she educated. Her first visit to Ireland was in 1782.

In later days, when the estate became incumbered through the improvidence of a brother, it was prevented from going the way of its many fellows through Ireland chiefly through her able management. No worthy tenant on the estate ever entertained fears of being dismissed, and no new tenant admitted without a scrutiny into his character and habits. The greatest intimacy and affection existed between herself and her father. While a witness to the numerous occasions where he was brought into contact with their neighbours of the middle and lower classes, she had opportunities of studying the native character in every one of its phases, and well she turned these opportunities to account. There is no evidence in her writings of her being much influenced by religious motives; but certainly if her works are not stamped with a religious character, no mark of irreligion can be detected. The good fathers and mothers of her stories all go to church on Sundays, and take their children along with them. She leaves the duty of religious training to the clergyman, without hindering or assisting him, and, perhaps, that is the thorough fulfilment of a novelist's devoirs. In one instance she holds up to the reader's dislike a certain Miss Black, who does all the injury she can to those who do not adopt her own peculiar views; and for this we are sure our readers will give slight blame to the authoress of "Ormond." Her father's hand is evident through most of her early productions.

The "Early Lessons" and "Parent's Assistant" were written in continuation of portions begun by her father and his first wife. "Practical Education," a joint production of father and daughter, appeared in 1798. "Belinda" and "Early Lessons," 1801; "Castle Rackrent" and "Moral Tales," 1802; "An Essay on Irish Bulls," 1803; "Popular Tales" and the "Modern Griselda," 1804; "Leonora," 1806; "Tales of Fashionable Life," 1809 to 1812; "Patronage," 1814; "Life of her Father," 1820; "Helen," 1834. She died May 21, 1849, at the advanced age of eighty-two, having well merited of her country, of educators, and of educated. May her memory be long kept in honour!

Bailieboro', in the county Cavan, enjoys an honour which, probably, is little known or valued by its inhabitants. It has given birth to the author of "Polyanthea," "Brookiana," "Beauties of Burke," "Wandering Islander," and "The Irish Valet, or the Whimsical Adventures of Paddy O'Halloran." Mr. C. H. Wilson, son of a clergyman of that locality, received his education at Trinity College, and afterwards was entered at the Middle Temple. He neglected his legal studies for the uncertain profession of letters, contributed to gazetteers and periodicals, was as improvident as his countryman, Oliver, and died with a shilling in his possession. He is represented as possessed of great powers of memory, a talent for repartee, and a strong relish for social enjoyment. Some friend published the "Irish Valet," in 1811, after his death, wrote a biographical preface, and dedicated it to Earl Moira, a nobleman who seems to have enjoyed a monopoly of dedications during his career.

Paddy O'Halloran goes to try his fortune in England, is enabled to render some services to a young lady who happens to be crossing the water at the same time in the same vessel, falls desperately in love with her, and after serving some score of masters, finds means of persuading her to be his wife. Her aunt is inexorable, and will not assist the imprudent pair; but they are relieved by the ordinary "*Deus ex machina*" of the old novelists—a lottery ticket. The book is full of whimsical adventures, puns, smart dialogues, and satirical remarks on the follies and vices of the day; but the author did not possess the genuine *vis comica*, nor the power of interesting his readers.

"Corfe Castle" and "Eva," the latter a historic romance of the days of Strongbow, may have fallen under the eyes of some of our readers in the days of their wild oats. The ruffian, MacMurrogh, is quite a sentimental hero; O'Ruarc, a libidinous old wretch, whom Dervorgalla did quite right to abandon, and all Irish annalists are quite out in their estimation of the men of the Invasion. These romances were written by Miss Milliken, of Cork, sister of the talented laureate of "The Groves of Blarney." Mrs. Mary Boddington, *née* Comerford, also native of the "Beautiful City," wrote the "Gossips' Week." Miss Chetwode, an intimate friend of the Russian princess, Daschkoff, and authoress of "Bluestocking Hall," "Snugborough," and other novels, claims Cork for her birthplace; as well as James Sheridan Knowles, author of "George Lovel" and "Fortescue," and so many delightful dramas. Is man ever to be content, even when his dearest wishes are gratified? and whether will that object be attained under the sway of the great polygamist, Brigham, in the ecclesia where the "Essays and Reviews" will supply the place of the Book of Common Prayer, or in the far-looming future Church to be founded by the ghost of the Chevalier Bunsen?

Poor Mat Gregory Lewis, acquired at an early period of his life a very undesirable reputation. He wrote one of the worst books in the English or any language, without being seemingly aware of having done any thing wrong, and felt very much astonished when he found he had thereby incurred the displeasure of his father and of all reflecting Christians. All the time his own conduct is said to have been irreproachable. If we were to distinguish prose fictions by the names given to dramatic performances, all Lewis's novels would come under the class, melodrama. In this we do not mean to disparage that exciting section of literature. Commend us to the good stirring piece of the *Miller and his Men* any evening, rather than a dull, woful tragedy! The still living play-goers of 1809 recal with sad pleasure the production of *Rugantino* in the old Theatre of Peter-street, Mr. Henry Johnstone presenting the patriotic Bravo. Twenty years later he appeared in the same character in Hawkins'-street, when he was sufficiently portly, and would hardly be recognised by his portrait in *Walker's Hibernian Magazine* of 1808 or 9, as the chivalrous O'Donoghue of the Lakes.

The recollections of the drama have led us aside from the original story which the author professed to have adapted from the German. Of a numerous class of readers of the period, (1805 *et circa*), those who were not in search of the terrible, kept a look out for the lascivico-horrible. The Germans were supposed proficients in furnishing the article; so if a native had been busy with an original production of the kind, he sent it forth as a translation from the High Dutch. In our own times we witness a process the reverse of this.

Auguste Maquet, the author of the most successful of Dumas's romances, wrote a drama of which these were the edifying ingredients. A brave, good-hearted colonel, going to the wars, marries a young lady merely to secure herself and family from ruin, and starts on his expedition five minutes after the ceremony. Just as he has passed the gates, the officer to whom she had been betrothed, and who ought to have been dead, returns. O misery! Confident in their mutual virtue, they spend longer time together than is exactly expedient, till the lover, stung with remorse, flies to a beleaguered city in Flanders, and is blown from a mine some score of perches into the air. The husband returns, finds a furnished cradle in his grateful, but frail wife's apartment; and the end of the world would arrive but for her devoted sister, who attributes the presence of the terrible bit of furniture to a piece of indiscretion on her own part. All is now prosperous except with the poor lady of the "white lie;" but the blown-up hero returns and the betrayed husband finds out the truth. What's to be done? Why, what can be done by the noble-minded colonel but forgive guilty wife, and marry her to worthless lover, and resign himself to the discomforts of celibacy!

An English writer of talent admires the plot of this edifying drama, softens down some situations, and publishes it in the shape of a novel, without acknowledging his obligations to Maquet, or any Gaul of woman born. Had he flourished in the days when young ladies wept away their eyes over "Werter," he would have manfully translated the "Chateau de Grantier," and given the author such honour as his hot-house production so richly merited. But to return to the "Bravo."

All this time the poor, famished stranger, the Bravo Abellino, is trembling with cold and hunger on the edge of the great Canal in Venice. He gets an opportunity of saving a nobleman from the poignard of a ruffian, asks for relief from the rescued man, is scornfully refused, is brought by the baffled bravo to the den of his associates, and consents to share their fortune. The description of the man and his reception furnishes a fair specimen of the fee-faw-fum style of the book. He has just appeased his terrible hunger.

"Picture to yourself a stout young fellow, with well-formed limbs, and the most horrible countenance that ever was invented by a caricaturist, or that Milton could have adapted to the ugliest of his fallen angels. Black and shining, long and straight, his hair flew wildly about his brown neck and yellow face. His mouth was so wide, that his gums and discoloured teeth were visible, and a kind of convulsive twist, which scarcely ever was at rest, had formed its expression into an eternal grin. His eye (for he had but one) was sunk deep into his head, and little more than the white of it was visible, and even that little was overshadowed by the protrusion of his dark and bushy eyebrow. In the union of his features were found collected in one hideous assemblage all the most coarse and uncouth traits which ever had been exhibited singly in wooden cuts; and the observer was left in doubt whether this repulsive physiognomy exprest (*sic.*) stupidity of intellect or maliciousness of heart, or whether it implied both of them together.

"'Now then, I am satisfied,' roared Abellino, and dashed the still full goblet upon the ground. 'Speak! what would you know of me? I am ready to give you answers.' 'The first thing necessary,' replied Mateo (their chief), 'is to give us a proof of your strength; for this is of material importance in our undertakings. Are you good at wrestling?' 'I know not; try me.'

"'Cinthia, remove the table. Now then, Abellino, which of us will you undertake?' 'Which of you?' cried Abellino; 'all of you together, and half a dozen more of such pitiful scoundrels.' And he sprang from his seat, threw his sword on the table, and measured the strength of his antagonists with his single eye. The banditti burst into a loud fit of laughter.

"'Now then,' cried Abellino fiercely; 'now then, for the trial. Why come you not on?' 'Fellow,' replied Mateo, 'try first what you can do with me alone, and learn what sort of men you have to manage. Think you we are marrowless boys or delicate signors?' Abellino answered him by a scornful laugh; Mateo became furious; his companions shouted loud, and clapped their hands.

"'To business,' said Abellino; 'I am now in a right humour for sport: look to yourselves, my lads;' and in the same instant he collected his forces together, threw the gigantic Mateo over his head as if he had been an infant, knocked Struzza down on the right hand, and Pietrino on the left, tumbled Tomaso to the end of the room, heels over head, and stretched Baluzzo without animation on the neighbouring benches. Three minutes elapsed ere the subdued bravos could recover themselves. Loud shouted Abellino, while the astonished Cinthia gazed and trembled at the terrible exhibition. At length Mateo cried out with an oath, rubbing his battered joints, 'the fellow is our master. Cinthia, take care to give him our best chamber.'"

The Doge's niece, the fair Rosabella, is engaged to be wedded to Count Monaldeschi, but she would prefer the gallant young Flodoardo, a young stranger lately arrived and in great favour with a brave old senator. A rejected suitor and some profligate young noblemen form a second Catiline conspiracy to assassinate the niece of the Doge, the Doge himself and his faithful councillors, and Abellino is hired to remove these last. He slays Mateo in an attempt made on the life of the Lady Rosabella; Monaldeschi is found dead, with a scroll signed ABELLINO attached to the poignard; the loyal councillors are removed, and even the Doge is visited in his private apartments by the terrible bandit. Flodoardo is promised the hand of the lady if he can secure the bravo; so he engages to deliver him on a certain day in the great Hall of the Palace. On the same day the conspirators, at Abellino's suggestion, throng the hall to secure the Doge, while their partisans, at a certain signal, will seize on the arsenal, &c.

Those who have witnessed on the stage the concluding scene, will agree that the situation can hardly be surpassed for absorbing interest.

The story, with the exception of a few coarse and profane passages, is harmless enough. The author, son of the Deputy Secretary at War, was born 9th July, 1775. He spent part of his youth in Germany, and imbibed some of the worst qualities of the writers of that nation. On the death of his father he succeeded to considerable property in the West Indies, and was much liked by his dependents. He died on a return voyage, May 14th, 1818. His too notorious romance appeared in 1798; "Tales of Wonder," 1801; "The

Bravo," 1804; "Rugantino," the drama founded on it, 1805; "Feudal Tyrants," 1806; "Tales of Terror and Romantic Tales," 1808, and twelve dramas, from 1797 to 1812. The most noted of these are the *Castle Spectre*, 1798; *Adelgitha*, 1806; *One o'Clock, or the Knight and the Wood Demon*, 1811; and *Timour the Tartar*, 1812. He has left us the "Journal of a West India Planter," and his memoirs have been written by Mrs. Cornwell Baron Wilson.

We abstain, on system, from giving the skeleton outlines of those novels to which we wish to direct our readers' attention, as it virtually defeats a writer's dearest objects when the reader obtains premature knowledge of the plot. However, as we do not look on the perusal of the Rev. Charles Maturin's romances as a healthy occupation for the mind, we shall depart from our general practice in taking notice of his "Women, or Pour et Contre."

Young Charles de Courcy, a youth of eighteen, coming up to Dublin to enter on college life, has the good fortune to rescue a young lady of fifteen from certain minions who are conveying her off at the instigation of a dreadful beggar and maniac, beside whom Meg Merrilies was a comely middle-aged woman. After some trouble, and a smart fever, he is allowed to visit at her uncle's, but the family and their connexions are of the extra-dissenting body. Nothing is spoken or thought of but election and the reverse, and poor De Courcy, who is irrecoverably in love with the angelic Eva Wentworth, can scarcely get opportunity of saying a word to her, tender or commonplace. So what might hardly be expected from an alumnus T.C.D., six feet high, he takes to his bed, and would never have risen therefrom, had not his friend, Montgomery, and his guardian, made a descent on the Puritan family in Dominick-street, and obtained his freedom of the house. But the youth of the parties puts immediate marriage out of the question; and though the amiable and sincerely-pious Eva dearly loves her betrothed, she is far from letting the depth of her affection become evident, and he cannot take kindly to the eternal tea-meetings and dinners where nothing is discussed but points of doctrine, and where he cannot speak on any subject of art, or literature, or love, to Eva.

Just then a paragon of beauty, and musical and dramatic genius, appeared at the Theatre Royal, Crow-street, and took Dublin and the too susceptible heart of our hero by storm, but was, in her own turn, captivated and enslaved by the dark-haired youth of eighteen! Visits, conversaziones, and pleasure excursions to Wicklow ensue, but Zaira finding her hero betrothed, submits to destiny, and will be satisfied by that kind of friendship to which Plato's name, without Plato's consent, has been given. Though a stage-singing woman, she is rich, a decent-living Christian, and of irreproachable morals; and beginning to suspect that a longer stay in Dublin would not tend to good, she prepares for departure. De Courcy comes to say farewell; but after he and she have said it till they scarcely know the meaning of the word, he will not let her depart without taking him along with her as her future husband. The mad beggar has twice or thrice crossed their paths, and scared them, and to his despairing self-accusing note to poor Eva, she returns an answer replete with piety, resignation, and affection, which will act as coals of fire on his head for many a day.

Zaira will not consent to be his wife till they have spent a year visiting the great cities of Europe. They resort to Paris in 1814, where all the great people of Europe are then collected. The Herculean handsome Jeune Irlandais captivates all Paris, and especially a certain beautiful, cold-hearted Mlle. Eulalie, and he begins to be disgusted at being considered a protegé of the great actress, and to feel the barbs of remorse tearing his heart more and more for his desertion of the angelic Eva. At last, hearing from an acquaintance that Zaira had been a married woman, and that her visit to Ireland had been with intent to recover her child, and receiving a terrible letter from his guardian with news of Eva's being dangerously ill, he returns to Dublin without leave obtained or asked from Zaira. Blamable as the poor actress is, no one can help feeling the deepest sympathy for her when thus forsaken. She has only a slight hold on Christian faith, and hope, and love, and in her misery she is exposed to the selfish and wily designs of Mons. Cardonneau, a rank unbeliever. She seeks for strength and consolation in Christian practices; but her mind is unhinged, and she determines on suicide. This part of the story, giving so much space to the Atheist's plausible theories, founded on the prevalency of evil in the world, and to the diseased workings of the poor sufferer's mind, is the most unhealthy portion of the book. Zaira is at last deterred from self-destruction by a vision of Eva leaning on a resplendent cross, and beckoning to her, and she embarks for Ireland.

Poor Eva goes through the ordinary stages of a rapid decline, strives to raise her affections from earth to heaven, and is nearly successful, when De Courcy, a mere shadow of what he was a twelvemonth since, throws himself at her feet. It is too late, however: she will not divide her latest hours between an earthly and a heavenly love. Zaira, on her return to Ireland, finds, to her terror and amazement, that the mad beggar is her mother, and at this point we learn the particulars of her early life.

She was the illegitimate daughter of an atheistic gentleman in the West of Ireland, who separated her from her mother at an early age, for fear of her receiving Christian impressions. He took great pains in having her taught accomplishments, and she repaid his care by privately marrying her Italian tutor. On finding this out, he banished her from his house, and she gave birth to a female child in Dublin. Her selfish husband forwarded the babe to its grandfather, took his wife to Italy, made her adopt the musical drama as her profession, and from at first being looked on as a drudgery, it became a passion with her. Her task-master died at last, acquainting her before his death with what he had done with their daughter; and her visit to Ireland had been with the object of finding her out. Alas! her wicked father had just been done to death by the hand of one of his own sons; and it was not till now that she learned how her child had been intrusted to Mrs. Wentworth, and that in all probability her weakness in listening to the vows of De Courcy was at the moment on the point of conducting her long sought child to the tomb.

All the particulars of the approach of death to the pure-minded, unworldly Eva, are dwelt on with melancholy pleasure by the writer. Just as her spirit has commenced its heavenward flight, her unfortunate mother arrives at her bedside, and for her there will henceforth be no comfort on earth.

While the clergyman is reciting the burial office over the virgin's coffin, her mother on one side, and her guilty lover on the other, are wrapped in silent misery, all heedless of each other's presence. After spending two or three hours by her grave, De Courcy, in the last stage of consumption, and with his soul tormented by remorse, resigns his spirit, and the hapless mother is left to endure a dreary existence.

If it were not for the nature of the subjects selected by our author, we are convinced that his works would be generally popular at this day. In morbid analysis of the soul's faculties, in vigour of description, in profound thought, and in truthful delineation of character, he can scarcely be surpassed. Then he carefully arranged his design, and always had *in petto* a surprise for the reader in the end of the third volume. In the story reviewed, however, the hero, notwithstanding his height, and acquirements, and personal qualities, is altogether a contemptible character; and in the "Wild Irish Boy," the writer was so full of Lady Delacour (Miss Edgeworth's Lady Delacour), that a fair charge of plagiarism may be lodged against the syren of that work. Only for a certain morbid thread that pervaded the mental texture of the spirits of Maturin and Banim, they would have produced fictions not inferior to the Waverley series.

The Rev. Charles Maturin, as probably most of our readers already know, belonged to Saint Peter's Church, in this city, for several years. His death took place in 1825. "Women, or Pour et Contre," was published in 1818. The "Milesian Chief," "Montorio, or the Fatal Revenge," "The Wild Irish Boy," and "Melmoth," had appeared in succession since 1811. The "Albigenses" was his last published romance. He also left "The Universe," a poem, a volume of Sermons, "Bertram," and one or two other tragedies. A criticism on "Montorio," will be found in Sir Walter Scott's Miscellaneous Works. Scott was a great admirer of Maturin's genius: he superintended the publication of his posthumous volume of sermons.

We were meditating on the length, the form, the substance, and the moral of our winding up to this article, when the inopportune appearance of the sable messenger of the printer's inferno nipped the project in the bud, lightening ourselves of some trouble, and probably our readers of some annoyance.

MRS. HALL'S LAST NOVEL.—"CAN WRONG BE RIGHT."*

QUITE apart from the special interest which, as Irishmen, we are proud to claim in Mrs. Hall, this, her last, most singular, and powerful tale, demands a notice in these pages.

The heroine, Mildred Kennett, the daughter of the village schoolmaster, tells her own story. There is a great deal of quiet power, as well as art, in Mrs. Hall's management of this sort of narrative. There are all the unconscious colourings and the occasional half-reserves, which even the frankest autobiographer will practice, along with those strong, but delicate touches of character, and trifling, but unmistakable evidences of temperament and organization, which disclose, perhaps betray, without describing the individual. This girl—clever, solitary; for she is an only child, and motherless—deeply passionate, and very beautiful, exercising upon her impetuous nature a strange stoical self-control, with strong religious sentiments, and yet deficient in the sober estimate of duty, which in every difficulty supplies a simple and unerring test of right and wrong—this handsome, thoughtful, but, in some sort, wild creature has admitted, and even cherished a secret passion for the heir of Brecken Hall, Sir Oswald Harvey, who, in his early boyhood, was placed by a capricious mother, for a time, under the visiting tuition of Mildred's father. Her passion is unconscious, until it has acquired all the mastery compatible with a nature so habitually reserved and self-sacrificing.

From a wayward, but not ungenerous boy, Sir Oswald has grown, during a long absence, to the estate of manhood, with all the attributes proper to a hero. On his return to Brecken Hall, his first excursion is to visit his old tutor, Mildred's father. Frank, kindly, and gentle, this type of the high-bred English gentleman wins his way, without the least intending it, to the heart of the girl.

About the same time, the family of Mansfeld Grange return, after a long continental sojourn devoted to the health of Caroline, their last surviving child; and this daughter and heiress, Miss Mansfeld, of the Grange, becomes that interloping heroine, No. 2, who causes so much uneasiness, uncharitableness, battle, and even sudden death, in the world of romance.

This girl is one of Mrs. Hall's finest and most forcible pictures. There is a rumour of an intended marriage between her and Sir Oswald—*only*, however, a rumour—but the fame of her wonderful beauty is everywhere, and well attested. Mildred is working at her embroidery, alone, in her little room in her father's cottage. Let us see how the vision which haunts so much of her after-life with a shadow so baleful, for the first time comes and goes:—

"I was so intent on my work, that I neither saw shadow, nor heard step, but started as the voice of a woman, not of a bird, joined in my song

"'I thought you never would look up,' she said; 'and now you need not be alarmed; I came to see your embroidery.'

"I knew it was Miss Mansfeld: she was dressed in a gray riding-habit.

"In another moment she gathered up her drapery, and stept, or rather bounded, so lightly through the window, into the room, that she never disturbed my silks. She bent over my work so long, examining it leaf by leaf, thread by thread—having first thrown off her hat—that I had ample time to gaze upon her beauty.

"Her features were exquisite in shape and size, but the eyes, dark and flashing when facing the light, had a tone of colour, a glitter, that I did not like to look at—a sort of greenish hazel: they were rapid and restless in their movements. All seemed, and was, unstudied; there was no more art in her movements than there is in the attitudes of a panther. I have written the name of a cruel, graceful, and beautiful animal: from the moment Miss Mansfeld bounded into my little chamber she was associated in my mind with all that was faithless and fascinating."

With these peculiar graces the talk is in musical though painful harmony.

"She praised my taste and skill; she

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* "Can Wrong be Right." London: Hurst and Blackett.

took my hands within her long and slender fingers, and said I must tell her how I had acquired so much power over the world of flowers.

"She told me to open my heart to her. She asked me who taught me to braid my bright brown hair after the fashion of ancient Greece, and how I preserved the delicate fairness of my complexion in in my half-peasant life. She promised, when I came to the Grange, she would show me pictures that would so improve my taste that I should quit their presence a new creature, 'though that,' she said, looking at me with an admiration of which I was ashamed, 'would be a pity; she would not be my fairy godmother, and change me from what I was, for worlds.' After loitering and lingering about my little room, and then waving round it and round it with a soft, stealthy, cat-like step, as if she wanted to get out and could not, or to spring on something she desired to destroy, she suddenly expressed a wish to see my father.

So the lady vanishes, and the cottage sees her no more; and her only recognition of Mildred henceforth is by an insolent message through her French maid—a very clever sketch by the way—peremptorily countermanding some embroidery which Sir Oswald had ordered for his destined bride—for such it turns out in sober earnest Miss Mansfeld is.

Mildred has just lost her good old grandmother, and the incident is turned to account in one of those delicate strokes of nature which abound in this clever tale. Sir Oswald, in a casual visit, speaks to old Kennett, as they stand in the twilight gloom of the little cottage parlour, in a corner of which, unseen, Mildred is sitting.

"The simple observation, 'How much Mildred must feel this death,' thrilled through my heart. He, then, knew and remembered my name! Do not smile, Mary; but the rapture of that sensation I can recall *now*."

The approaching marriage of Sir Oswald with Miss Mansfeld is no longer doubtful; and the silent struggle and agony of poor Mildred are piteous. It turns out too, that Miss Mansfeld exercises the power of her fascinations and her prerogative as bride elect, with a tyranny and caprice which reduce her now unhappy lover to the verge of degradation. Mildred fancies that this aggravates her grief. We take leave to assure her the reverse is fact. Love is selfish in proportion to its intensity; and although our poor Miss Kennett talks heroics over the clouded happiness of her hero, we venture to inform her that there is something in this particular misfortune which does not altogether displease her.

The day and hour of the sacrifice, however, have arrived: all is chaos in poor Mildred's heart and brain; and this dreadful tumult is described with unusual power. The village was now emptied of "all save the very young and the very old." Mildred had made excuse and staid at home, and here comes one of the cardinal incidents of the story.

"I went into the corner where she (her grandmother) used to sit, and drew her little spider-table to me. I opened her Bible, where her spectacles remained, marking a passage she loved much to quote,—

"'Keep innocency, and take heed to the thing that is right; for that shall bring a man peace at the last.'

"I knew it well; yet I read it over and over again; it soothed me to read the passages she loved . . . . gave me strength. I heard our garden gate open and swing back, there was a rush of rapid footsteps on our pathway,—and then Sir Oswald Harvey stood before me! I attempted to rise—he commanded me by a gesture to keep my seat; he struggled for utterance. Never had he seemed so unlike himself, so unlike any human being I had ever seen.

The cause of his strange visit is explained:—

"'Sit still,' he said, at last, 'sit still, and listen to me, if you can, calmly.' He spoke in a suppressed voice, more terrible than the loudest tones of anger. 'You must decide at once; no time to reason—only time to feel and act. What is done must be done quickly. Observe, I say QUICKLY!—within an hour!

"'Last night, too late to prevent the gathering at Mansfeld Grange this morning, Miss Mansfeld and myself AGREED, that we were so perfectly unsuited to each other, that marriage between us two would be a sin, and a mockery of grace, human and divine. I am, therefore—mark me—I am therefore, a FREE MAN. We two are freed, I repeat to you, from all contract with each other. I am FREE—that is the simple fact. No man likes to recall how he has been outraged and insulted by a woman he has loved, as I have

> loved her; but every man desires to prove he can free himself from thraldom. She dared *me* to this proof! She laughed and taunted me—that, contract or no contract, I should ever be her slave—that I *could* not wed another! I swore, that before the hour of noon to-day, I would lead to the altar one who loved me better than ever she loved me.
>
> "'Give me your hand, Mildred,' he repeated twice, 'give me your hand!'—but I could not move it—I had lost all power. What could I think it but a dream? 'Then,' he added, bending over me, 'I will take it, thus —— and ask you within one hour to be MY WIFE!'
>
> "The mist cleared from around me, and I could meet his gaze; but his presence, the presence I so loved, was like that of the destroying angel—he was *all* VENGEANCE!"

So Mildred Kennett becomes, by a precipitate, private marriage, within a few hours, Lady Harvey, the wife of "the wise, good, and pure," Sir Oswald. The less said about "wisdom," at least, the better; but we remember that it is the adoring Mildred who writes.

He has married in a tumult of anger and agitation—not for love, but "vengeance"—and the state of his mind and his nerves is attested by his passing the honeymoon in brain-fever. On his recovery it is resolved to leave England. On her father's short previous visit, her new embarrassment is very well drawn. For the first time her quick feminine perception, already trained to new habits, detects, with irrepressible mortification, the old schoolmaster's little offences against etiquette and the proprieties of the dinner-table, upon all which the "wise" Sir Oswald is specially sensitive. Better still are the old man's sensations on discovering some little fine-lady traits in his Mildred:—

> "'So—so—yes—it is—I only hope she will be happy—yes—she must be changed, of course—the bramble bears roses when grafted—ay, in a year; but it takes longer for the rose to go back to the bramble; I am feeling very queer, as if I had lost my child,—and *that* is a changeling.' My poor father.'"

So to the Continent they go, and by this time poor Mildred has made the sad discovery, which turns the triumph into the funeral of her hopes; a secret sorrow is henceforward at her heart. Sir Oswald is not recovered by foreign travel. It becomes painfully plain that the worthy baronet requires, though of course he is too "wise" to say so—not change of scene so much as change of *wife!* He still loves "the heiress of Mansfeld Grange," and poor Lady Harvey, though plentifully supplied with "esteem," has not even a spoonful of that "love" on which her heart is set.

Galignani has a paragraph announcing Miss Mansfeld's marriage with some suitable *parti*, and of course Sir Oswald grows perceptibly worse. They remove to Naples, and there they find that the Mansfelds have already established themselves. At the dead of night their hotel is on fire, the alarm is given, Mildred escapes, and a cry is heard. It is Caroline Mansfeld's voice. Sir Oswald flies to her rescue, and poor Mildred sees him bear her from her chamber in his arms, while she repays him with a look of inexpressible tenderness and passion. Poor Mildred sees this, and awaits at a little distance his coming.

Sir Oswald joins her.

> "We stood face to face, the beams of that Italian moon shining upon us both. Margaret left us alone together. I could not speak; I tried, but the power was denied me. I remained as if transfixed against the rock. Sir Oswald did not seem to me the same; he was changed, utterly unlike himself; the terrible internal strife, and the marks of the scorching fire, were on his brow. I heard his words indistinctly, as if they came from a far-off distance. 'I know, Mildred, that you can never forgive me; but, God knows how earnestly I have struggled against this insanity. I thought I had conquered, but I am still a slave. I do not seek to make excuse, nor hope for pardon—I only desire to perish with her, that was all—to die with *her*. I had no sinful desire to live with her, but *she* desired life. Had we perished, you would have been avenged.'
>
> "'I do not seek vengeance,' I faltered out at last. 'I had never, since I became your wife, had a desire for aught but your happiness'"

In the state of mind in which he leaves her, she resolves on suicide.

> "I wept bitterly. I think those tears I shed saved me from madness. Then, sinking on my knees, I wrote him my first letter.
>
> "I wrote to him a simple farewell,

> saying *why* I had determined to restore to him his liberty—why resolved to free him from the chain that was weighing him down into his grave. I wrote upon my knees a prayer to God for his happiness.
>
> "I wrote to HER,—I placed before her how she had lost him, and how, now that the priceless treasure she had coveted, yet well-nigh destroyed, was again within her grasp."

"By dying," she argued, "I should make him happy." This distinct and monstrous deviation from right is the point on which her unhappy story turns. She does not, however, destroy herself. Leaving her letters and shawl by the deep and swollen river, to induce the belief that she had drowned herself, she finds an asylum in a little mountain convent. The stratagem succeeds—we shall presently relate with what ultimate results. The whole episode of the nunnery, and the picture of conventual life and character, though French romance has often brought us within the precincts of the monastery, is quite new, and yet drawn and tinted with a sober and very impressive reality. Here poor Lady Harvey, for the first time, learns that her crime has not sacrificed herself alone, and that she is likely to become a mother.

Her imprisonment in the convent, the incidents of her escape, the adventures of the flight, and her own and her companions' disguises and dangers, are very cleverly worked up. To England eventually she comes, and there she finds her husband married to Miss Mansfeld, and her father dead. She—the real Lady Harvey—gives birth to a son and heir, in self-imposed solitude and obscurity. This child is, of course, a new difficulty and agitation, in the false situation to which she has reduced herself. She reconsiders the question; but the same perverse sophistry prevails:—

> "My resolution was taken. Poor and desolate as I was, and with his child on my breast, I resolved not to disturb its father's happiness."

We find her next in the out-door employment of a fashionable London milliner, supporting herself and her child by the wages of her old art of embroidery, with, to be sure, a little capital, furnished by the sale of her bracelet, in reserve, but still in a position quite precarious and alarming enough to lead her to one more serious reconsideration of her precipitate decision, compromising not only herself but her child, whose fortunes and happiness it required a fearful amount of maternal stoicism, even when the point of principle was quite got over, to sacrifice, in cold blood, either to her own sentiment or Sir Oswald's ease. Once again the old fallacy prevails; but she contrives, in the disguise of a "reporter," to hear Sir Oswald deliver his maiden speech in the House of Commons. It proves a "tremendous hit," and just as Sir Oswald retires, she happens to cross the lobby—her hat blows off—down comes her hair. The worthy baronet evidently recognises her, but she escapes; and we can't help feeling that the gentleman's exertions to discover the masquerader are not quite so energetic or judicious as might have been expected from such a paragon of honour and wisdom.

As her child, the rightful heir of the long line of Harveys and their great estates, grows in stature, beauty, and intelligence, her self-reproach and misery increase. She herself attacked by small-pox, narrowly escapes with life, having lost every trace of her beauty, and, indeed, so far of her identity, that no old friend could possibly recognise her. Availing herself of this impenetrable disguise, she resolves to present herself to Sir Oswald with her child, and see what will come of it. The baronet has by this time become a great patriot and statesman, and the most brilliant orator of the time; but he is stricken with a hidden sorrow. He has evidently got what *Sergeant Kite* calls "too much wife." The second Lady Harvey by courtesy has proved just what we should have expected—not only cruel, but utterly base; and there is no cleverer page in this clever book than that in which we recognise, with a sort of shock, the fascinating Caroline Mansfeld in the matured, evil, and, as it turns out, dying Lady Harvey. She is the same — not changed but developed—the spell of the perishable beauty is weakened, and the base and dangerous traits have come forth into forbidding and even terrible relief. Unrecognised, the poor, perverse, generous Mildred comes into actual contact with Sir

Oswald and Lady Harvey, and their gay party. The situation and the scene are, in the highest degree, dramatic. The catastrophe, but not worked out by Mildred, follows speedily. More slowly, the reconciliation —melancholy, and, for this world, profitless—like *Undine's* parting kiss of peace and death.

Poor Mildred writes her sad tale in a spirit of adoring humility. Her husband is her idol. When she closes her recital with the often-forgotten though obvious moral, "wrong can never be right," she never once suspects that the hero, whose apotheosis she celebrates, points that moral, if less instructively certainly more dishonourably than herself.

The man who marries for pique is not only a fool but (we beg Mildred's pardon for writing so unfeminine a word, finding no other exactly so expressive) a BLACKGUARD! There are, of course, many varieties of the genus, and they don't all apply their talents in exactly the same direction; but we beg leave to assure the first and last lady of Sir Oswald Harvey—though she won't allow it—that in his treatment of her, that clever baronet, "wise, good, pure, and noble," as she records him, *was* simply a blackguard. From this distance of time, and our own impartial point of view, we may be permitted to look at matters a little differently from that very ill-used though erring lady. Ill-natured people will think, as we have hinted, that a little more time and a few additional inquiries might have been decently expended before assuming the shocking death of poor Mildred, and proceeding to install her successor. To be sure we must remember Sir Oswald's precarious health, and the necessity of applying the proper remedy quickly. But, making all fair allowances, the leading incidents of his domestic life, and the easy way, too, in which he slid over that little affair of the reporter, about which, of course, he had his own strong private opinions, fixes Sir Oswald Harvey, in our minds, very definitively as a polished and accomplished brute; and we venture to suspect that Mrs. Hall, kind and womanly as all the world knows her, has not formed quite so merciful an estimate of Sir Oswald's character and doings as poor worshipping Mildred, who thinks of him with upturned eyes, and relates his story on her knees.

We don't often meet with a work, in any sort didactic, so entirely praiseworthy as this. The quiet wisdom drawn from the highest sources pervades it.

Mrs. Hall is no dealer in modern theories of married relations. She is content with the simple Scriptural rule, and insists upon its spirit no less than its letter. Listen to her charge to wives—

> "I have no words to express the bitterness of my contempt for any woman who gives voice to her husband's faults. It is her duty to woo him from them within the sacred sanctuary of home—to entreat, to reason with, to struggle against them heart and soul; but never to betray. Never—never put faith in woman who, having knelt at God's altar, would go free of her bond, or abate her duty to the head and heart of her existence. I tell you Mary—Mary dearest, believe me—this new seeking of womanly independence among married women is an outrage against God and nature; it is one of the works of Antichrist; it is what no Christian woman can dare to countenance. She can never remove the seal from the bond. Let her beware of signing it. If she find she cannot bend, let her not enter into the covenant; but having entered, no human law can unbind—no word of man unloose—what God has joined. Man was created to protect and cherish—woman loving to serve; there is no reasoning, no arguing, 'If *you* cherish, *I* will serve.' If the man forget his duty, let the woman be protected; but, under ALL CIRCUMSTANCES, keep the bond inviolate."

Read this beside her pretty, we may say eloquent, dedication, which is well worth transcribing, as the best testimony to the wisdom of her doctrine.

> "I inscribe these volumes," she says, "to the guide, the counsellor, the unchanging affectionate friend, the devoted husband, who for five-and-thirty years has laboured for me, and with me: to whose care and judgment I owe whatever success I have achieved, and from whose example I have learned to value the dignity and happiness of work."

There is no moral Bloomerism here; and the same sound doctrine, and noble and gentle feeling everywhere dignify the book. The episode of the poor needle-girl is a touching instance of this; and we observe, at every natural opportunity, the same vigilant, but unobtrusive anxiety to point out and impress forgotten duties, and to rebuke those unheeded faults which form the daily habits of some lives, and the miseries of others.

Many wise saws, in a more condensed shape, such as we call "reflections," the fruits of habitual thought and observation, drop easily and pointedly from her pen. "We pray most for death when we ought most to dread the judgment," says Mrs. Hall; and again, "When did jealousy *not* exaggerate? Of all our evil passions it is the one least under the control of justice."

Some of the best are those which come up spontaneously in her clever bits of description. Here are three maiden sisters, sketched with that delicacy and force which, though conceived in the genial spirit of truth, have the effect of satire.

> "I thought of them as the Misses Flexible, belonging to that undulating class of women who agree with every thing and everybody; who, without intending to be false, have never the self-reliance or the moral courage to be true. They were all afflicted with different degrees of by no means an uncommon weakness—*love of approbation*—which, of all our moral weaknesses, most surely undermines all dignity and singleness of purpose—all simplicity and purity of character. They praised every thing, because they wanted every thing to praise them. There was nothing ever done that they had not thought of doing. They trumpeted each other's sayings and charities, and were too well satisfied with themselves to be dissatisfied with any thing. They were always insinuating how they had helped *this* person, and pushed on the other—they were three gigantic I's."

It is pleasant, we dare say, to even a veteran barrister, to have an honest case to commend to his jury. And certainly, no less so is it to a reviewer, even an old stager, to take in hand a book like this, which in every aspect deserves his honest good word. "Can Wrong be Right?" is Mrs. Hall's *chef-d'œuvre.* There is an exuberant fertility here, characters and episodes enough, not intruded, but naturally and even necessarily inwoven in the tale, to furnish material for half a dozen more than average novels. In none of her previous works has she reached the same dramatic force and variety of situation. The story unfolds itself with a sustained and exciting rapidity that never flags. She does not rely upon the power and glare of her incident, to the neglect either of the higher or the minuter excellencies of her art. There is work and care in all her details, and extraordinary vigour and finish in all her portraits. As a repertory of life-like character, and richly pictured description, no less than as a strangely fascinating story, we predict for the work a very marked and general success.

THE LEADBEATER PAPERS.*

THIS book belongs precisely to that particular species of literature which we would most gladly see multiplied and encouraged. It is a simple and intelligent, and, although a Quakerly, still a very lively record of village life and adventure, covering a period of fifty-eight years, from 1766 to 1824. The village of Ballitore, in the county of Kildare, of respectable antiquity, and a chief Irish colony of "the people called Quakers," will always, and everywhere, possess a special interest, as having witnessed the happy and studious schoolboy days of the great Edmund Burke. With this splendid and imperial exception, and the more modest one of the excellent and clever Mary Leadbeater, the authoress, among other things, of the "Cottage Dialogues" and of these "Annals of Ballitore," the village is not directly associated with any name of general notoriety. And we must add, that it is not to these that the work, in a principal, or, indeed, in any considerable degree, owes its peculiar charm and value. Nestled among groves and hedge-rows of ancient timber, by the banks of a pleasant stream, and sheltered in the lap of a beautiful valley, the scene and atmosphere breathes the sweetness, serenity, and seclusion, that so well accords with the primitive and philanthropic simplicity of the Quakers of a hundred years ago, and which, we are almost tempted by these records to believe, reacted gently and delightfully upon the Quaker character in Ballitore. The gentle and pleasant spirit of the authoress throws a sort of rural sunshine and fragrance over these annals; and her high intelligence, and her simplicity, candour, and uniform benignity, flavoured, nevertheless, with a certain archness and innocent humour, give her style at times a sisterly resemblance to that of Goldsmith. Books of this order, though dealing little with public events, and still less with public characters, conversant with but a single locality, and with, for the most part, a society wholly unknown to fame, possess, nevertheless, a high and peculiar historic value. They preserve, with a most satisfactory and curious fidelity, the domestic arrangements and social manners of their time, and all that is most perishable and transient, because most conventional and accidental, in social progress.

The authoress, Mary Shackleton, better known by her married name of Leadbeater, was born in Ballitore, in the year 1758. "Her father, Richard Shackleton," says the prefatory memoir, "kept a boarding-school, which had been established in that village in the year 1726, by his father, Abraham Shackleton, a native of Yorkshire, and a member of the Society of Friends." This school maintained a very high character and position to the close of the century, and many of the best names in the country are to be found in the Ballitore "school-list."

The character of the fair writer colours these annals most agreeably—a vigorous common sense, and keen and lively observation are mellowed by the most purely womanly kindness, and toned by the seclusion of her quaint and friendly sect. Perhaps the education of the clever Quakeress best explains that simplicity which so often makes us smile, while so uniformly commanding our respect, in these pages. The peculiarity of that education will best explain itself in this little anecdote (of the year 1771), which wears, in our mind, so pretty and conventual a smile and sadness.

> "Even in our quiet abode trouble and temptation sometimes intruded.. Well do I remember that evening when, with no intention of breaking our prescribed bounds, we stretched our necks over the orchard hedge to procure a sight of feats of horsemanship which were being exhibited in a neighbouring field; but Tom Wray and John Elsey, who saw our situation, prompted

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* "The Annals of Ballitore, by Mary Leadbeater, with a Memoir of the Author; Letters from Edmund Burke heretofore unpublished; and the Correspondence of Mrs. R. Trench and Rev. George Crabbe with Mary Leadbeater." Vol. I. London: Bell and Daldy. 1862.

> by good-nature or politeness, approached, and prevailed upon us to descend the ditch. We went with the timidity of conscious misdoing, and, mixing with the crowd of spectators, did not lose this uneasy sense in the entertainment which so new a scene afforded. Yet amusement was beginning to be the predominant sensation, when to our utter dismay and confusion, James M'Connaughty made his appearance! I do not think he spoke one word, but we followed him from the place of diversion with countenances glowing with shame, and hearts smitten with remorse. Thus were we introduced into the presence of our aunt and our sister Margaret. My discerning aunt saw we were already punished, and added little to our punishment; but my sister had become serious, and had sincerely embraced religion. Affrighted at the slippery paths of youth, she regarded our error with more severity than did our more experienced aunt. Her lecture was very grave on our having clandestinely stolen away to partake of amusements which we knew would not be approved of, and she asked how the query periodically asked in our meetings of discipline concerning attendance at 'vain sports and places of diversion' could be answered. At this climax we verily believed we were in imminent danger of being disowned by the Society. We burst into tears, which ceased not to flow till we lost the sense of our guilt and sorrow in the sweet oblivion of sleep."

The book is necessarily desultory, and in our mind, all the pleasanter on that account; the fair annalist leading us with a lively affluence of anecanecdotal and traditional gossip, from house to house, in the old village, as she remembered it in the year 1766. Forming an angle with the domicile of a certain Sarah Fuller was the dwelling of her grandmother, Rachael Carleton, daughter of "the venerable George Rooke," a Quaker native of Cumberland, who in one of his journeys to Ireland, as a preacher, made the acquaintance of Joan, daughter of John Cooke, of Limerick. Honest George lost his heart to the charming Joan, then a young and blooming widow, with no lack of this world's goods. "Her beauty and her wealth," however, Mrs. Leadbeater assures us, in perfect good faith, and we dare say, the worthy George himself thought likewise, "were not the charms which secured the affections of George Rooke. He met in her a kindred mind; and her virtue and piety determined his choice." At all events, he pressed his suit with due fervour and resolution; and the story of his success is so simply and pleasantly told, that we extract it word for word:—

> "As he rode to Limerick, with intent to make the tender of his hand, he was joined by another young man, who opened his heart to him, and told him he was on his way to address the fair widow, requesting his interest on the occasion. George's alarm at finding he had a rival was great, and his emotions occasioned such agitation, that, one after another, the buttons of his waistcoat burst open. However, he proved the successful candidate, and was married to Joan in 1686. They were accounted the handsomest pair that had been married in the meeting-house for a long time, and they lived in comfort and plenty in Limerick, till the horrors of war broke in upon their domestic quiet."

Remembering that the narrative reached her from the lips of the daughter of Joan and George, its continuation will be read as a curious authentic illustration of the troublous scenes which accompanied the Jacobite campaigns in Ireland.

> "When Limerick was besieged by William III., officers and soldiers of the Irish army were lodged in their house, and cannon-balls passed through every room but one. On one occasion, Joan Rooke sate on her chimney-hob, watching the pot in which her dinner was boiling, lest the Irish soldiers should make a prey of it. The pot was removed, and she had left her seat, when a cannon-ball dashed through the hob where she had sat. We had also a family tradition, that she had stooped her head to let a ball pass over it. That she was a woman of courage was evident, from her having threatened the soldiers who were quartered in her house, to complain to their officers of the ruffianly conduct which they declared their intention to pursue. They had spoken in Irish before her, believing her ignorant of the language; she understood it, but heard them out before she let them know that she did so, and then awed them into good behaviour."

Their experiences of the first siege of Limerick quite satisfied the worthy George and Joan, who prudently beat a retreat before the advance of De Ginkle's battering-train and grenadiers, next spring. The preparations for this movement and their adventures on the way to Dublin, read like a pleasant page of "De Foe:"—

> "My great-grandmother quilted some of her broad pieces of gold into the tucks of her under petticoats, and filled false heels in her shoes with the remainder. They melted their plate into wedges, and aban-

doned their comfortable house and costly furniture, which had once been the objects of Joan's nice housewifely care; and ever after she was perfectly indifferent how simple her furniture was, if it were only kept whole and clean. They hired a guard to convey them to Dublin, and it was uncertain what might have been their fate had he not been faithful to them. This man, when old and poor, was tenderly cared for by George Rooke, so true is it that 'honesty is the best policy.' They lay the first night in a place surrounded by Rapparees. My careful great-grandmother lay awake watching their property. Her husband forgot all care in a sleep so refreshing, that in the morning he congratulated his wife with, 'My dear, we have had a fine night;' she had not found it so, and notwithstanding all her care, had lost her riding-hood. After a short stay in Dublin they embarked for England, with their three little children. My grandmother, who was then about three years old, never forgot her great affliction at letting her doll fall out of the cabin-window, and seeing her treasure swallowed by the waves. They staid till this land was freed from disturbance, sold their estate in Limerick, and then settled in Dublin."

Proceeding from the Burrow-gate up the main street of the village, we encounter the habitation of Joseph Wills—a characteristic portrait of the year 1766 :—

"Joseph was a man retired from business, who lived upon his income in a genteel, comfortable style, keeping what is called good company and a good table, and attentive to the cultivation of his land and garden, and to the provision of his household. He was elderly, rather low in stature, somewhat corpulent, and his nose large and carbuncled; he wore a gold-laced hat and waistcoat, and moved along the street with slow and stately pace, smoking out of a long, clean pipe. Thus arrayed, he frequently walked into his neighbours' houses, which opened with latches, and inquired what they had for dinner, at the same time poking his staff into the pot, for they mostly sat in their kitchens in the forenoons. This familiarity was of course not always acceptable. Sarah Fuller's servant ran in to warn her mistress of his approach: 'Here's Mr. Wills, here's Mr. Wills!' but she was not quick enough. 'Noble intelligence!' retorted Joseph, gravely, as he followed her. He had his singularities, but he was 'respectable,' and Elizabeth Shackleton piqued herself on being always on good terms with him. He encouraged and assisted her taste for gardening; he delighted in dandling her sweet little Rachael and receiving her caresses, and avoided the house for some time after death had taken from thence his little favourite; this trait of tenderness the mother remembered with gratitude."

And very pretty and pathetic is that simple note.

There is nothing pleasanter than the gaiety of the fair Quakeress. She mentions that—

"Amongst the pupils at this period (1772) was a young Quaker from Jamaica, Jesse Balrieves. On rising one morning and beholding the ground covered with snow, a sight he never had seen before, he called out in astonishment, 'O boys! see all the sugar!'"

In the same vein, in 1796, she records :—

"About this time a visit was paid, by appointment of the monthly meeting, to recommend such of our Society as had fire-arms or other instruments for the destruction of man, to destroy them. The only person amongst us who was in possession of such an instrument was Molly Haughton, who resigned to destruction her husband's old fowling-piece, and joined in the laugh raised at her expense."

We have in the following anecdote of one Richard Miles, a village parallel for the old story of Sheridan and Wilberforce :—

"In his uncle Richard he had an example of the woful effects of intemperance, for no remonstrance could prevail upon unfortunate Dick to resign his habitual love of the bottle: and what mortified the Friends of the village was, that when in a state of inebriation Dick particularly chose to speak our plain language in its greatest purity, though not belonging to our Society."

This primitive Quaker family—the good and clever Shackletons—were not without their peculiar pleasantries. Mary Leadbeater relates of her mother that—

"She entertained a few rather singular scruples, one of which was her objection to images, even in china, on which we sometimes amused ourselves with finding an almost imperceptible man or bird. To gratify this scruple, the parent of one of the pupils procured for her a tea-service from China without any images."

We are pleased, too, to perceive that her father did not revolt from even the frivolity of a pun :—

"The butchers," she writes, "were of all tradesmen the chief annoyance to my mother, as they frequently intruded on her while at breakfast, exhibiting their wares, and praising 'the colour and fat.' On seeing them approach, my father was wont to call out, 'Mistress, fortify, or, if possible, *fiftify* thyself against the butchers.'"

But this form of jocularity seems to have been a favourite one among the Quakers of ninety years ago. The annalist says :—

"In speaking of my early days, I must not omit to mention James and Nanny M'Connaughty. Who that knew us has not known James and Nanny? Their honesty, their neatness, their simplicity, and even their singularities claimed affection and respect. Nanny had been servant to my father, and her integrity and diligence, and above all, her piety, gained her universal esteem. An old man sometimes frequented Ballitore, by name John M'Connaughty, famous for having made a perfect pun. It was thus. John, having joined the Society of Friends, entered into a religious disputation with a clergyman, who threatened, at length, that he would cane him. 'I believe,' said John, 'thou hast more of the spirit of Cain [cane] than of Abel [able] in thee.'"

John M'Connaughty's son, James, inherited his father's fondness for a joke :—

"Old John was charmed with the good qualities of Nanny Waring, and destined her for wife his son James, whom, on his return home, he sent to visit her. One *bon mot* amongst others is recorded of James during his courtship. While arguing on one occasion with his beloved upon some indifferent matter, she said, by way of reproving his positiveness, that she believed he wanted to persuade her out of her name. 'It is the very thing I wish most to do,' replied the brisk bachelor. His wish was accomplished; and as they were returning from having presented their marriage, while James rode attentively beside his intended bride, a person remarked on his complaisance not very kindly, and added, 'But when poverty comes in at the door, love will fly out at the window.' Nanny never forgot this sarcasm. She often repeated it, and always with this observation: 'No, no! though poverty came in at the door, love *never* flew out at the window.'"

The simplicity of Nanny's testimony is indefinably pretty and touching.

Towards the close of the last century the old Irish traditions of duelling and intemperance continued in full force. Indeed, the practice of the latter vice in the upper ranks of society was very much aggravated at that period; and the orgies of Irish gentlemen in 1790 would have filled their genial ancestors, who forty or fifty years before loved to drink a very light claret from very small glasses, at so leisurely a rate, that the gay compotators were little more excited by a four or five hours' revel, than they would have been by sipping small beer for the same time. For the year 1795, our annalist, however, makes the following characteristic entry :—

"A young officer of Colonel Keating's regiment, after dining at Power's Grove, and leaving it at a late hour, or rather early next morning, was thrown from his horse in a state of intoxication, and lived but a few days. He was the second who lost his life by the mistaken hospitality of that house."

Such epidemic vices culminate and render themselves, at last, intolerable, as they approach the period of their extinction; and society, in self-defence, at last expels the enormity—purges itself, and liberates its successors for all time to come.

As a companion piece, we take from "the Annals" of the year 1782, a curious and striking portrait of an Irish duellist of the period (1782).

"My father and mother, with others of their family, were by special invitation at the house of their landlord, Clayton Bayley, at Gowran, when Beauchamp Bagnell and a young man of the Butler family, who had dined at Lord Clifden's, came in a state of intoxication to the house. Clayton Bayley was very unwilling to be intruded upon while enjoying the company of his former preceptor; and his wife was greatly distressed, for she was certain that 'that wicked Bagnell would insist that her husband must drink with him all night, or else fight him.' It was in vain our host insisted that he was 'not at home,' which he firmly maintained malgré the lectures of his old mistress; he was at length obliged to appear, and, as an apology for not receiving them, to inform Bagnell that he had Quaker guests in his house. This Bagnell declared was an additional inducement to him to desire admission, for of all things he loved Quakers. He entered on crutches, having been lately hurt in a duel; and, though disfigured by lameness, and obscured by intoxication, the grace of his form and the beauty of his countenance were so conspicuous, as to excite in no small degree the mingled sensations of admiration, pity, and regret. He had entered into the world with splendid gifts of fortune and still more splendid gifts of nature, and possessed a mind not unworthy of them, till, drawn into the vortex of dissipation, his mind debased, his constitution shattered, his fortune impaired, he became the wreck which now appeared before us. It was to my mother that Bagnell addressed his conversation. He repeated his declaration of affection to the Society of Friends, and assured her that he agreed with them in sentiments, and wished to belong to their body, 'only that he could not in that case retain his corps of volunteers.' My mother made little reply, but he, rising soon after to leave the room, expressed much unwillingness to lose her company, and at length left the house, much to the relief of all who remained in it except my mother. Her mind was so impressed with sadness in contemplating the situation of this man, that she believed it her duty to inform him of it. In the course of a few months she heard he had come to visit his sister Keatinge; she went to Narraghmore and had a conference with him, honestly laying before him the injury he did himself and others by his conduct and example. He heard her not only with polite but with serious attention, acknowledged the truth of her remarks, and lamented his inability to keep those good resolutions which he had often made. He assured her that he approved and esteemed the principles of her Society, and that the sentiments he expressed in his state of intoxication were sincere. He thanked her cordially, and at parting kissed her hand."

Scattered through these "Annals" is a good deal of that lore which made the pleasant fire-side recreation of our Irish ancestry, on winters' nights, and which reads here the more agreeably for the faint disclaimers and the evident half-belief with which good Mary Leadbeater sets them down :—

"All the learning and piety in our village could not conquer the superstition of the age. A neighbour died of a malignant fever; he had a thrice repeated dream before he took ill, in which a voice called to him three times, 'Prepare!' It seems as if intimations of no common import have been occasionally thus conveyed, and that some attention is due to them; but, as all good things are subject to abuse, superstition has made of dreams an instrument of torture to weak and susceptible minds; and, alas! superstition was one of the sins of Ballitore. The death of one of the Fuller family was said to be announced by the melodious wailing of the Banshee, who, when visible, appeared in the form of a beautiful woman combing her hair. For the rest of the neighbours the croaking of a raven sufficed on these solemn occasions. The spirits of the departed were said to be seen gliding through the meeting-house grove, and 'the Runner,' a stream flowing through the heart of the village, could not be crossed after midnight without fear and trembling. The candles going out suddenly during an evening meeting, foretold the death of the venerable Abraham Shackleton; previous to which candles went out several times in the chamber of a little pupil, and even my sensible mother deemed it a warning that her father-in-law would shortly expire—which he did."

These are the stories of ninety years ago; and of the same date (1772) is the following tale of the fairy-stricken Tom Duffy :—

"There lived at the foot of the Nine-tree-hill, about this time, a comfortable farmer named Loughlin Duffy. His son Thomas, when nine years old, while returning from the funeral of a brother, was suddenly taken ill, and lost his speech and the power of walking. Continuing in this state, he permitted no one to see him eat, but took what was left for him, taught his brothers and sisters to read and write, wrote a good hand himself, and performed several works of ingenuity, such as making a fiddle, a wooden lock, &c., under the bedclothes. There was, of course, but one cause assigned for this marvellous dispensation—Tom was fairystruck. The fairies visited and instructed him in the solitude of his confinement; he was serving his apprenticeship to them, and at the end of seven years he would come forth a great doctor. The term, however, continued two years longer, and on his recovery Tom became a schoolmaster, which occupation he filled with credit among the lower ranks for the remainder of his life. He seemed to enjoy good health, his constitution when he arrived at maturity having probably overcome those nervous affections which were the cause of his strange condition; but he was ever small in size, and had a dwindled, pale appearance. After his neighbours had looked for a while for something extraordinary from him, the fairy theory seemed forgotten. To visit him in his confinement made a favourite walk for our visitors. Not far distant from his habitation was the Rath of Mullamast, the chief abode of fairies in this country, and the place where they held their court. Tradition also reported it to have been a Danish fort; and the hole in the centre, which was bare of grass, was asserted to have been made to contain the blood of their prisoners of war, for no grass ever grew where human blood had been shed. As another proof of this assertion, a bare spot on the Nine-tree-hill was shown as that where a gentleman named Dillon had been shot in a duel."

The death of her grandfather in 1770, was, as the good old man himself believed, intimated by a supernatural occurrence, thus related by the writer:—

> "In the following winter the candles suddenly went out in our meeting-house without any apparent cause, and the subsequent illness of 'the old master' interpreted this into an omen of his death. His spirit, disengaged from the world, awaited in calm acquiescence the Divine will, and often overflowed in sweet counsels to those who visited him, although through his long life he had been always 'swift to hear, slow to speak.'"

In 1785 there occurred two deaths, one of them in the family, heralded by similar supernatural intimations:

> "This year the small-pox deprived my brother and sister Chandlee of their fine little Betsy. My mother, who seemed born to sympathise and to comfort, was not absent from her daughter at this trying time. She was awakened at seven one morning by the sound of sweet soft music. She knew it was no mortal harmony, and it seemed to her the song of an ascending spirit. Perhaps it was so, for her little grand-daughter expired at that moment. My mother was very free from belief in preternatural occurrences, yet this and the following circumstance of a similar character made an impression upon her mind which no reasoning from natural causes could remove."

The other was that of a pious friend, Jonathan Haughton:—

> "His daughters Hannah and Sally were beside him, watching and endeavouring to alleviate the last struggles, when a solemn sound of exquisite sweetness suspended their agonies and repressed their tears, and the gentle spirit then departed. Whether this seemingly preternatural circumstance was permitted in order to console the survivors is a mystery into which I may not pry."

It is but fair, in transferring those very remarkable records, to specially remind the reader of that sober and scrupulous respect for truth which then and there proverbially distinguished the Quakers, and of which the family of Shackleton was a noted example. A story still more extraordinary is recorded (1789) of an humble "Friend" and neighbour:—

> "As Nanny M'Connaughty sat one day beside a sick and dying friend, she looked out of the window, and thought she saw her husband coming towards the house. She went down to meet him, he was not there, and when she went home she found he had not been out. She was shocked at the time, and was still more alarmed when James took ill of a pleuritic fever the very next day, for she believed that she had seen his fetch, as a forerunner of his death; and, trembling, she told my mother of the apparition. Now, whether Nanny was mistaken, or whether this warning was permitted to prepare her for the event, is still a doubt with some. The event was, however, fatal; in one week from this time Nanny became a widow."

Of the same nature, though purely mental, is the following remarkable relation. The occurrence accompanied the death of Mrs. Leadbeater's father, to whose sick chamber she and her mother were at the moment hastening:—

> "What were my sensations in this solitary journey, as I traced the ground I had often ridden over by my father's side! At Shane's Castle my mind suddenly became calm. I looked at my watch, it was eight o'clock, my imagination fancied it could hear whisperings in the sick chamber, and I thought perhaps the spirit was released. My mother had similar feelings at the same time, and we afterwards found that this was the moment of the departure."

But over this scene of rural beauty and repose the sword was suspended. The terrible year, '98, was approaching. Some few of the historians of that awful crisis mention Ballitore as one of the towns that suffered in the insurrection of the county of Kildare. But not one, from Musgrave down to Maxwell, hints at any of the attendant horrors of the event. They simply mention the name of the town as one of those for a time held by the rebels, and afterwards occupied by the Royal forces. Under this brief, cold, and dry allusion future times would have failed to suspect the presence of a visitation the most dreadful. In these annals, however, the scene expands with a horrible reality and fulness; and if they gave us nothing more but this one frightful picture of civil war, otherwise lost to future times, the historical value of these modest village annals would be established.

Early in the summer of 1798 Ballitore, now a noted seat of disaffection, was occupied by the King's troops:—

> "To the Tyrone Militia were now added the Suffolk Fencibles; and the Ancient Britons, dressed in blue with much silver lace —a very pretty dress—came from Athy, seized the smiths' tools, to prevent them from making pikes, and made prisoners of

the smiths themselves. I could not see without emotion poor Owen Finn and his brother, handcuffed and weeping, as they walked after the car containing those implements of industry which had enabled them to provide comfortably for the family. Several of these were whipped publicly to extort confessions about the pikes. The torture was excessive, and the victims were long in recovering; and in almost every case it was applied fruitlessly. Guards were placed at every entrance into the village, to prevent people from entering or leaving it. The village once so peaceful exhibited a scene of tumult and dismay, and the air rang with the shrieks of the sufferers and the lamentations of those who beheld them suffer. These violent measures caused a great many pikes to be brought in: the street was lined with those who came to deliver up the instruments of death.

"A party of military from Naas entered Ballitore, and took prisoners twelve of our neighbours, whom they removed to Naas gaol. Most of the villagers stood outside their doors to see them depart. They looked composed for the most part, though followed by their weeping wives and children. One child, with his cries of, 'O father, father!' excited great compassion."

On the 24th of May the troops received orders to march to Naas. The mail coach had been stopped there:—

"The insurrection was to begin in Dublin, and the mail-coach not being suffered to leave the city was the signal for general revolt. This purpose being defeated by the vigilance of government; the mail-coach had got to Naas before it was stopped, yet its detention there persuaded the people that the day was their own. They threw off the appearance of loyalty, and rose in avowed rebellion. In the morning the Suffolk Fencibles first marched out, nine men remaining to guard their baggage at the Mill, which was their barrack. The Tyrone Militia followed, taking their baggage with them. All was hurry and confusion in the village. Several who had kept out of sight now appeared dressed in green, that colour so dear to United Irishmen, and proportionably abhorred by the loyal. The Suffolks went by the high road, the Tyrones through Narraghmore. As they marched out, a young woman privately and with tears told their lieutenant her apprehensions that their enemies lay in ambush in Narraghmore wood. He was therefore prepared to meet them, and sad havoc ensued; many on both sides fell, particularly among the undisciplined multitude. The court-house at Narraghmore was attacked, and many met their death there. We heard the reports of fire-arms, and every hour the alarm increased."

And now the insurgents began to show themselves openly, and soon took possession of the town in force. Mrs. Leadbeater's quiet description of this turning of the tables is highly picturesque and stirring:—

"Dr. Johnson had been sent for to Narraghmore to dress wounds; the rabble despoiled him of his horse and case of instruments, and sent him back jaded and worn out. About three o'clock in the afternoon John Dunne and many others came as far as the bridge with pikes, and Dr. Johnson turned them back; but not long after two or three hundred men armed with pikes, knives, and pitchforks, and bearing sticks with green rags fluttering from them, came in at the western side, headed by Malachi Delany on a white horse, and took possession of the town; Dr. Johnson, as representative of the yeomanry-guard, having capitulated on condition of persons and property being safe."

Once established in the town, "the boys" were soon, after their own fashion, at free quarters. It is but justice, however, to the rebel forces, to record the traits of forbearance and courtesy which the fair annalist here relates:—

"I saw from an upper window a crowd coming towards our kitchen-door; I went down and found many armed men, who desired to have refreshments, especially drink. I brought them milk, and was cutting a loaf of bread when a little elderly man, called 'The Canny,' took it kindly out of my hand and divided it himself, saying, 'Be decent, boys, be decent.' Encouraged by having found a friend, I ventured to tell them that so many armed men in the room frightened me. The warriors condescended to my fears. 'We'll be out in a shot,' they replied, and in a minute the kitchen was empty."

Shortly after a prisoner was brought into the town. It was Mr. Richard Yeates, son to Squire Yeates of Moone—his yeomanry coat turned. An old man, a private of the corps to which he belonged, was brought into the parlour in which she and her husband sat at tea.

"We made him sit down to tea, and invited also his captors, but they declined; one of them went to the table and helped himself to bread and butter, looked at himself in the mirror, and remarked it was 'war time.' The prisoner, with tears trickling down his cheeks, spoke sadly of his seven children; his guards strove to console him by telling him that 'he was an honest Roman, and should not be hurt.' Presently we heard a shot, and those strangers imme diately said they 'supposed Richard Yeates was shot.' This was really the case. He was taken into a house, and in despite of his own entreaties, the endeavours of many others to save him, and even the efforts of Priest Cullen, who begged the life of the young man on his knees,—he was murdered, being piked and shot!"

After the rebels had abandoned the town, we find this melancholy note:—

"As my friend and I walked out to see a sick neighbour, we looked with fearful curiosity over a wall, inside of which we saw lying the youthful form of the murdered Richard Yeates. There he had been thrown after his death, his clothes undisturbed, but his bosom all bloody. For many days after I thought my food tasted of blood, and at night I was frequently awakened by my feelings of horror, and stretched forth my hand to feel if my husband was safe at my side."

While these agitating sounds and sights were scaring the quiet inmates, scenes more stern were going on outside.

"A party of insurgents, as they went to the mill, met some of the wives of the soldiers stationed there, whom they sent back to tell their husbands that if they surrendered they should not be injured. But the women, instead of delivering the message, ran shrieking to announce the approach of the rebels, and the soldiers prepared to stand on the defensive; but, when they saw such a multitude, fled. In the pursuit over Max's-hill a soldier turned, fired, and shot Paddy Dempsy dead. They were soon overpowered, and their lives were spared only on condition that he who had killed the insurgent should be pointed out; with this hard alternative his comrades reluctantly complied, and the soldier soon lay dead beside his victim. Another of the soldiers was killed by a shot from the Mill-field, which reached him about the middle of the avenue, and his remains are buried in the ditch just by the spot where he fell. Most of the others were wounded, but I believe none mortally."

The insurgents now began to seize the horses of the townspeople; a reign of terror—the martial law of rebellion—was forthwith established, and men were everywhere pressed for the rebel service:—

"A man afterwards came, with a horse-pistol in his hand, to take my husband. My brother had been previously taken, together with some of his guests. They were all to be brought to the camp in the hollow side of the hill at the east, and when the soldiers came, they should be placed, the insurgents said, in the front of the battle, to stop a bullet if they would not fire one. This man, not finding my husband below, and thinking he was concealed, ran up stairs where our little children were in bed, with the huge pistol in his hand, swearing horribly that he would send the contents of it through his head if he did not go with him. I stood at the door, less terrified than I could have expected, and asked a young man who had accompanied the other if they meant to kill us. 'To kill you?' he repeated, in a tone expressive of surprise and sorrow at such a supposition. At length he prevailed on his angry companion to go away, threatening as he went, that if the Quakers did not take up arms their houses should be in flames, as 'Mr. Bayley's was.'"

The scrupulous quietude, truthfulness, and kindness of the Quaker community, and the consequent respect and good will in which they were held, exempted them, though not from the terrors, certainly from many of the actual dangers attendant upon these alternate occupations; the consequence of which was, that their panic-stricken neighbours regarded the house of Mr. Shackleton, the master of the school, as the only asylum which promised protection in that direful crisis. Its great parlour presented a scene such as Walter Scott might have painted in a romance of civil war:—

"Every one seemed to think that safety and security were to be found in my brother's house. Thither the insurgents brought their prisoners, and thither, also, their own wounded and suffering comrades. It was an awful sight to behold in that large parlour such a mingled assembly of throbbing, anxious hearts—my brother's own family, silent tears rolling down their faces, the wives of the loyal officers, the wives of the soldiers, the wives and daughters of the insurgents, the numerous guests, the prisoners, the trembling women—all dreading to see the door open, lest some new distress, some fresh announcement of horrors should enter. It was awful; but every scene was now awful, and we knew not what a day might bring forth."

Very curious, too, is the description of the young girls dressed in white, with green ribbons, and carrying pikes, who marched with the rebels. They had, it seems, patrols and a countersign. "But it was long," says Mrs. Leadbeater, "before they could decide upon the pass-word. At length they fixed upon the word "Scourges" —a word, we may add, of terrible significance just then. We here note another instance of the chivalry of an Irish rebel:—

"Sentinels were placed in various parts of the village. One day, as I went to my brother's, a sentinel called to a man who walked with me not to advance on pain of being shot. The sentinel was my former friend, 'The Canny.' I approached him and asked would he shoot me if I proceeded. 'Shoot you!' exclaimed he, taking my hand and kissing it, adding a eulogium on the Quakers. I told him it would be well if they were all of our way of thinking, for then there would be no such work as the present. I thought I could comprehend 'The Canny's' incoherent answer, 'Ay, but you know our Saviour—the scourges, oh! the scourges!' With little exception, we were kindly treated, and the females amongst us were frequently encouraged to dismiss our fears, with hearty shakes of the hand, and assurances that they would 'burn those who would burn us.'"

It was on the morning of the 24th May that the king's troops had marched from the town; and almost simultaneously the insurgents had entered it. On the 27th the place was once more to change hands, and to experience the horrors of a military retaliation. On the day previous, a proposition was made by Colonel Campbell, in command of the royal forces, to the effect, that six hostages should be sent in to him before an appointed hour to secure the surrender of the rebels' arms before the noon of the next day. Upon these terms he consented to spare the misguided people and the offending town. The general sentiment of the rebels was in favour of submission. "But," says Mrs. Leadbeater, "a few still held out, and amongst these was a priest." At all events, the hour of grace passed by unimproved; and at three o'clock next morning, the townspeople were roused from their beds by the intelligence that the troops were close at hand. We must allow Mrs. Leadbeater, in her picturesque way, to relate what she saw of the soldiers' entrance into Ballitore:—

"We saw the glitter of arms through the dust which the horses of the 9th Dragoons made, galloping along the high road from Carlow. We heard the shots repeatedly fired. We saw the military descend the hill, cross the bridge, and halt before our house, where some dismounted and entered, and asked for milk and water. As I handed it I trembled; my spirits, which had risen superior to the danger till now, fell; the dragoon perceived my emotion, and kindly told me I need not fear, that they came to protect us, adding, 'It is well you were not all murdered!' Thus assured, I recovered my composure."

Other troops, not yet arrived, were marching upon the town. And in the meantime, the cavalry already there maintained an illusory inaction. Poor Mrs. Leadbeater writes—

"I thought the bitterness of death was passed, but the work was not yet begun. Colonel Campbell's men, who had impatiently rested on their arms several hours, marched out of Athy. They took Narraghmore in their way, and directed their mistaken rage against the newly erected house of Colonel Keatinge, planting cannon to destroy the dwelling which so much worth had inhabited. They mortally wounded John Carroll, cousin to the Colonel. This party of soldiers entered Ballitore exhausted by rage and fatigue; they brought cannon. Cannon in Ballitore! The horse and foot had now met. Colonel Campbell was here in person, and many other officers. The insurgents had fled on the first alarm—the peaceable inhabitants remained. The trumpet was sounded; and the peaceable inhabitants were delivered up for two hours to the unbridled license of a furious soldiery! How shall I continue the fearful narrative?"

Portions of her narrative of what followed are among the most spirited and curious pieces of historical detail which illustrate that dreadful crisis, the interest of which will increase as time rolls on and manners change—

"My mind never could arrange the transactions which were crowded into those two hours. Every house in the Burrow was in flames; a row of houses opposite to the school was also set on fire; none others were burnt immediately in the village, but a great many windows were broken, and when I heard this crash I thought it was cannon. We saw soldiers bending under loads of plunder. Captain Palmer came in to see me, and was truly solicitous about us, and insisted on giving us 'a protection.' Soldiers came in for milk; some of their countenances were pale with anger, and they grinned at me, calling me names which I had never heard before. They said I had poisoned the milk which I gave them, and desired me to drink some, which I did with much indignation. Others were civil, and one inquired if we had had any United Irishmen in the house. I told them we had. In that fearful time the least equivocation, the least deception, appeared to me to be fraught with danger. The soldier continued his inquiry—'Had they plundered us?' 'No, except of eating and drinking." 'On free quarters,' he replied, smiled, and went away."

The next military intruder was

more in keeping with the terrific scene—

> "A fine-looking man, a soldier, came in, in an extravagant passion; neither his rage nor my terror could prevent me from observing that this man was strikingly handsome: he asked me the same question in the same terms; and I made the same answer. He cursed me with great bitterness, and raising his musket, presented it to my breast. I desired him not to shoot me. It seemed as if he had the will, but not the power to do so. He turned from me, dashed pans and jugs off the kitchen table with his musket, and shattered the kitchen window. Terrified almost out of my wits, I ran out of the house, followed by several women almost as much frightened as myself. When I fled my fears gained strength, and I believed my enemy was pursuing; I thought of throwing myself into the river at the foot of the garden, thinking the bullet could not hurt me in the water. One of our servants ran into the street to call for help. William Richardson and Charles Coote, who kindly sat on their horses outside our windows, came in and turned the ruffian out of the house."

In disgusting contrast even with this miscreant soldier is the fat tobacconist from Carlow, who lolled upon one of their chairs—an amateur in carnage and torture, who entertained the scared inmates with descriptions of the military executions with which the march of the soldiers had been signalized—recounting, exultingly, how many they had shot; and adding, "we burned one fellow in a barrel." In the thick and glare of such a phantasmagoria there is something very refreshing in this little bit of contrast.

> "A soldier, who had been previously quartered at my mother's, came to him, to beg leave to go see 'the old mistress.' My dear mother, who was now in the stage of second childhood, in her unconsciousness of what was passing, had lost the timidity of her nature, mingled and conversed freely in her simplicity with all parties, and was treated by all with the greatest respect and tenderness; for, amid the darkness of the tumult, some rays of light gleamed forth—some countenances expressed humanity and a weariness of the work of death."

The village physician, Dr. Johnson, was a suspected man, although, as Mrs. Leadbeater believes, most unjustly. He was arrested; and tumultuously carried along by a crowd of soldiers, who struck the buts of their muskets on his feet as he walked. They halted before "the shop of Mary and Anne Doyle." "The tumult was loud," says Mrs. Leadbeater. "I believe they called it a court-martial." Several gentlemen and officers who knew him exerted themselves to save him. The rest is told with graphic horror by Mrs. Leadbeater:—

> "A short time before the end, a soldier came into our parlour, and, with a kind of bitter smile, told me they were going to hang the doctor. I said I hoped not, and went up to my children, trembling. One of our servants entered the room, and said the doctor was shot. I started up, and contradicted her; just then the trumpet sounded a retreat. The window near my bedside had for some time caused me a dread which I could not account for, save by having heard of persons being shot through windows. But to this window I now went mechanically, and saw stretched before it, lying on his back, the friend I had known from childhood—my neighbour, my physician. His arms were extended; there was a large wound in the lower part of his face; and his once graceful form and intelligent countenance were disfigured with more than the horrors of death. I took but one look; I cried aloud; and Anne Doyle led me away. We went to the back apartments; the glass of the windows was hot from the reflection of the burning houses, but I looked on them with a stupid composure."

So soon as they were sufficiently recovered, Mrs. Leadbeater and her companion went to the house of the bereaved wife and children, not to console, but to share their grief. The widow's first intimation of what had happened had come in the most shocking shape. She had not the faintest suspicion of her husband's danger,

> "Until one of the Tyrone Militia came raging into the house, boasting that the doctor was shot, and calling for his wife, that he might cut her head off. She sank down upon her knees in a state that baffles description; her sister was little better, and the lamentations of the children touched even the hearts of the soldiers; so that instead of doing farther injury, they endeavoured to soothe their distress. I saw those mourners looking so sweet, so innocent, so sorrowful, that I could not bear it, but hastened into the garden; thither their servant followed me to consult what should be done with her master's body."

It is well that scenes like these should be remembered; not as a theme for declamation, or a tradition of hatred, but as an exhibition of the miseries and terrors uniformly attendant upon civil war. In these annals we encounter those trifling allusions which fancy could not anticipate, and which stamp the narrative as that of an eye-witness—pregnant with unimaginable horror. The neighbours dared not harbour even the corpses of their friends, lest the act should be construed into a complicity with their fatal disaffection. They watched them carefully where they lay, and drove away the swine, who were waiting to make a disgusting repast upon the remains. "For several months," says Mrs. Leadbeater, "there was no sale for bacon cured in Ireland, from the well-founded dread of the hogs having fed upon the flesh of men." The horrors of the insurrection did not subside with its suppression. Disorganization, terror, and violence long survived it. The outlaws concealed themselves in the natural fastnesses of the mountains, and descended in the night-time to plunder the defenceless villages beneath them. There was hardly a family in the country, poor or rich, who had not some one to mourn after the national convulsion had expended itself.

> "Late one evening, as we leaned over the bridge, we saw a gentleman and lady watering their horses at the river, attended by servants fully armed. They wore mourning habits, and though young and newly married, looked very serious and sorrowful. Their chastened appearance, their armed servants, the stillness of the air scarcely broken by a sound, rendered the scene very impressive. We very rarely saw any of the gentry; when we did, they were generally dressed in deep black; for what family had not lost a member? Mourning was the language—mourning was the dress of the country."

If the work contained no more than the simple and tremendous story of the sack of Ballitore, it would have claimed, for the sake of its terrible moral, no less than of its peculiar historical value, our most serious attention. But it supplies other and happier material for thought; and chief among these, a series of original letters from Edmund Burke, and of pleasant and kindly anecdotes of that simple and noble-hearted genius. These we have not ventured to touch upon in a review already, as some will think, of disproportioned length. They would furnish ample material for a separate paper, and will be read in future biographies as among the pleasantest illustrations of his playful and affectionate nature. We have preferred, however, dwelling upon the very special characteristic of the book, and treating it chiefly as a curiously minute and vivid painting of village life in the days of our grandfathers and great-grandfathers; and as having contributed, moreover, colour and detail, to that great history of the Irish insurrection of '98, which must yet be written in tesselation. What would we not give for so brightly tinted a photograph of village society, life, and scenery in the days of Shakspeare? No amount of intelligence or skill is thrown away upon the production of such a picture; and therefore we accept these "Annals of Ballitore," circumscribed and obscure as is the circle of which they treat, as a contribution to history in its best sense.

TWO GOSSIPING-BOOKS OF TRAVEL.

"THE Rifle in Cashmere"* is the journal of a keen sportsman, whom Indian service—for he bore Her Majesty's commission—introduced to all manner of Oriental game and sporting adventures. He tells them, like a lively mess-table rattle, with a good-humoured assurance and an unflagging flow of animal spirits. Just four years ago he landed at Kurrachee. His regiment was ordered to Rawul Pindee, *viâ* Moultan, and our lively warrior seems to have viewed the country with the eye of a poacher rather than of a strategist. "Black partridges, deer, and pig," he observes, "seemed to abound all along our road." Never mind—a man is not the worse soldier for loving the crack of a rifle in the perilous sport of those countries; and we thank him for sparing us his opinions upon the art military, and sticking to the topic of which he is thoroughly master, and which most men relish, at least in the recital. Near Pindee, we are happy to learn, he found a good snipe jheel, and plenty of quail. This, however, was mere small-shot practice, and his rifle was first employed against the ravine deer. Tigers, he regretfully remarks, were not numerous in the vicinity, and their habits here are more vagabond and uncertain than down the country. It was near Pindee, however, he tells us, that Captain Colby, of the 98th, a famous rifle shot, was killed by a tiger. "He thought that the tiger was dead, and approached it too soon after it was shot."

In 1858 he had six weeks leave, and went to Khagan with a friend. It was a tract nearly unknown to Europeans, and amazing were the rumours that reached them of the game to be found there. Disappointment, however, was, for the present at least, his lot.

> "We went up Khagan," he says, "but soon returned, having got no sport. One day we saw a battue after ibex, conducted by the Khagan chiefs. They surrounded a hill with their retainers, and drove a flock of ibex. They only killed one, a fine male. All the Sepoys fired into the flock. A bullet happened to lame one. About fifty more shots were fired at him, and he received two more balls. Then he fell down a ravine, where the dogs were let loose at him, and the noble brute was finally killed by a blow from the blunt end of a hatchet. I went home, feeling as if I had just witnessed a murder. A battue for pheasants is bad enough, but driving ibex is like sacrilege."

Returning to Peshawur, they passed through the Puckli valley, "a once-noted place for black partridges," he pensively observes, "now nearly all gone."

In the summer of 1859, having obtained two months' leave, he started once more for Khagan. The Commissioner of Huzara gave him a guard, and he reached Khagan in the month of May. "The three chief syads" he describes with a graphic brevity—"Univer Shah, a tall man, like an ogre, with an awful voice; Mergul Shah, afflicted with a great *gôitre;* and Zamin Shah, who dyed his beard a different colour every day, and had murdered his brother to get his property." These agreeable "syads" assigned him two men, Jemalli and Elam by name, to show him the game. These consisted of ibex, bears, brown and black, and musk deer. The ibex ground was as yet inaccessible on account of the snows which still lay unmelted upon the hills. Here, however, as he punctually records—"upon the 6th"—he had his first shot at a bear. The distance was very long, and the shot, he honestly allows, but a "fluke." Still the bear was hit, and they "tracked him, after several hours over snow, to a cave." There they left him, and returning next morning found him dead. And here he confers a wrinkle upon the inexperienced bear-hunter:—"If a bear takes to a cave, leave him there, and return next day and put dogs in. It is only foolhardy to go in yourself."

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* "The Rifle in Cashmere." By Arthur Brinckman, late of Her Majesty's 94th Regiment. London: Smith, Elder, & Co.

A few days later he killed another bear. While doing so, his *pose* may possibly have been graceful, but certainly not comfortable. "In firing at him," he says, "I was obliged to stand on the toe of my left leg, Jemalli holding up my right, and, with my left arm round a piece of rock, the fingers just supporting the rifle." The bear, it seems, was lying asleep. Every thing, however, we suppose, is fair against a bear—otherwise our officer might possibly again have gone home, "feeling as if he had just witnessed a murder."

These rough-coated gentry, however, even when taken sleeping, do not always succumb so easily:—

> "On the 20th," he writes, "I had a narrow escape. I shot at a bear asleep on a ledge of rock, and hit him in the neck; the next barrel missed him, and he charged full tilt. I turned for my spare rifle, and found Jemalli clubbing it over his head, and imploring me to get behind him. I just had time to wrench it out of his hand, and fire into the bear, now almost at my feet. The bear swerved and fell over the rocks. It was a small bear, and very old. I had no idea that the ledge of the rock did not run round; of course, bruin was not going to sit still and be shot at."

Another very critical escape had our military sportsman on the same excursion:—

> "I came," he says, "on a bear lying asleep. I had my fourteen-bore rifle in my hand, the locks of which were out of order. I fired, and both barrels exploded together, missing the bear. He got up and came a few steps towards me, and was now not five yards off. Jemalli, who was so plucky yesterday, ran off, leaving me to face bruin with an empty rifle. The bear stood winking at me, and cocking his head on one side. I stood still, hoping to jump aside if he charged, and staring him full in the face. How it would have ended, I know not, but luckily Jemalli, in his panic, fell down a ditch, and managed to explode my other rifle. The bear turned round at the report and went slowly off."

Perhaps the most curious story of this sort of sport recorded in the book is that which illustrates the extraordinary tenacity of life exhibited by a bear. If the cat has nine lives, bruin would appear to have thirteen:—

> "Three months after my return to Peshawur," he writes, "A——, of my regiment, returned from a trip to Cashmere. He had killed several bears. One of them took thirteen bullets to kill it! A large number; but I have no doubt of the fact. He (A—— of ours, not the bear) told me the story himself, and showed me the skin. Thirteen balls through the tail, claws, or ears, would not kill any animal; but these were all about the right place, except three, which were a little behind in the ribs. Some of the bullets were conical, fired from my 14-bore rifle, some 19-gauge conical, and others spherical bullets from a 14-bore shot-gun. A—— followed the bear to a ravine, after he had fired about ten shots into him, and he found bruin lying down apparently dead. He fired another shot to make sure, on which the bear got up and charged, sending A—— and his Shikaree down a *khud*, smashing the stocks of his guns, and dinging the barrels of my rifle in the fall. The bear was finally killed by rolling a piece of rock down upon his head. It was a male bear, but by no means a large one."

The largest brown bear he ever killed, was six feet ten inches. "Bruin," he adds, "is a very active animal, considering his bulk and look, and will bound over places where a man cannot follow." The black bear, however, in Cashmere, affords no sport whatsoever:—

> "During the summer and autumn they are all down among the villages, climbing the trees for mulberries or walnuts. You have only to walk to the tree and fire, and bruin falls dead, or scuttles off to the jungle. Early in the morning or twilight is the best time to seek for them; and also, if you like, by moonlight. Occasionally they seem startled at smelling you, but generally do not, because they are accustomed to see and hear the villagers near them all day. Of a night, if a bear is up a tree, go underneath with a lighted torch; the natives say that if you kindle a fire the bear will remain up the tree till daylight. A bear must be a fool, indeed, to do so; but I know that they will remain long enough to let you shoot at them, if you take a lantern under a cloth, and suddenly show it when under the tree. The black bear when hit, gives several angry growls, as if swearing at you; the brown only gives one growl, as if saying, oh! in pain. If not killed dead, and you follow up the bear in the jungle, you should be very careful. No matter how sharp you and your shikaree may be, you are no match for bruin when you are creeping among thorns and bushes. Black bears here afford no sport; it is not shooting at all, it is merely potting a black thing in a tree."

The following caution is worth reading:—

> "Take care you do not mistake a young black ox for a big black bear. I have

> known this occur several times, and, oddly enough, the majority of the accidents happened to members of the medical profession. However, the cost of an ox here is not much; so if you kill one by mistake, it will not ruin you."

In Cashmere, at a place called Nurla, he hired a native shikaree :—

> "He was a dapper little fellow, with a long pig-tail; scarcely a hair on his face; eyes that seemed to be always laughing, as if they were gazing at something funny; ear-rings in his ears, rings on his fingers; immensely fond of chaffing, continually playing practical jokes, possessing a fund of anecdote, and plenty of cheek; very fond of wine, and flirting with every woman he met indoors or out. In {fact, he was the most vivacious, jolly little fellow I ever had to do with out here; and worth his weight in gold, pigtail and all, to any one travelling through Ladak."

At Chumra he had the honour of sleeping in the same room with "a deity," who occupied a corner. "It was a picture of a man in red making horrible faces, with serpents twisting about his body."

> "At night I was awoke," says our sportsman, "by the entrance of a Llama, a lamp, and a lump of flour and a cup of hot tea. This offering was reverently deposited at the foot of the gorgeous altar. I resolved to get up early and hide the offering, and then see if the Llama would think that his god had eaten it. But I awoke too late, and saw my reverend friend walking out of the room with it. He nearly upset it all giving me a salaam as he closed the door."

We may here mention, in passing, one of those trifling afflictions peculiar—in degree, at least—to the country, and against which even the pluck and animation of our gipsy sportsman are not wholly proof. The fleas in Cashmere he solemnly pronounces to be "a great nuisance." Your shirt you must change morning and night; you must sleep, like a patriarch, in your tent or in the open air, and never "in a house at a village when you come to a halt. All your clothes and bedding should be hung up in the sun during the whole day." He recommends a bag of mint as the best preservative against this plague, and pronounces the "mercury dodge" recommended in Galton's "Art of Travel" a total failure. That ubiquitous scourge of hot countries, the mosquito, swarms also in Cashmere, especially, of course, along the rivers, in such clouds as to extract from our indomitable sportsman the remark that he "never saw so many before anywhere."

As we are upon the subject of the animated nuisances of Cashmere, we must not omit allusion to the snakes. "I told Sultan," he says, "to fetch my breakfast, which was wrapped up in a blanket lying some few yards behind. On opening the blanket out rolled two great snakes, one of which we killed. They were snakes of the venomous kind, and very deadly wounds are inflicted by them, according to the natives." Open-air sleeping in a country infested not only with the minor tormentors previously mentioned, but by reptiles of this kind, with a liking for blankets and snug lying, one would suppose a very serious set-off against the pleasures of this rough, vagrant, and exciting existence.

In Cashmere the bears form a principal attraction. Since our military men have made that country a sporting haunt the species has, of course, suffered severely, and in many places is on the verge of actual extinction. Bear-walks formerly inhabited by a dozen have now but a single denizen. Besides those that escape wounded and subsequently die of their hurts, 200, our rifleman calculates, are killed every year in Cashmere. There is also a great deal of ibex shooting—a sport which he seems to have enjoyed thoroughly. Burril shooting he holds in comparative contempt.

> "At the foot of the Snow pass I saw a flock of burril, and killed three," he tells us, "two at one shot. They were all huddled together under some rocks. I think them a very stupid, uninteresting animal. They are very easy to stalk. If you keep still you may empty all your barrels at them, then follow again, and kill some more out of the same flock. They are not nearly such fine animals as the ouriar, and, not being so knowing, don't afford such good sport. I dare say they may afford better sport when they have been much hunted, but I never met a clever flock of the species."

His ouriar shooting in India occupies nearly a chapter, but to the uninitiated the stalking, wounding, tracking, and, ultimately, the killing of these fine animals would prove rather monotonous reading.

Some of his general remarks and

special counsels are well worthy of attention, and will be found useful everywhere. Care and good nerve he pronounces to be the only safeguard against "accidents with fire-arms."

> "It is all very well to say, 'never let your rifle point at yourself or any one else.' You cannot help it during a long day on the hills. I never put a hammer to full-cock, except when raising my rifle to fire. I do not suppose that either of my rifles was at full-cock five minutes during the whole time I was in Cashmere. On getting near game it was always at half-cock. When taking my shot I used to squat or kneel first, then cock, aim, and fire. I never had both barrels cocked at once—you never require it. I once saw a friend load and press on a fresh cap with his thumb, and his gun exploded. I suppose a particle of flint must have got into his pocket among the caps. A Punjaub shikaree once let off my rifle close behind me—he was examining the locks. Once, in La'dak, I heard click, click! and turning I found my coolie had got one hammer at full cock, the other down on the nipple. They seem to look on fire-arms as playthings."

He attributes much of his success to the fact that his dress was always of the same colour as the rocks. Even when he had fired and continued to stand in the same position from which he had discharged his rifle, owing to this uniformity of tint, he escaped detection, although the buck at which he had fired was standing but 150 yards away, and looking full in his direction, yet unable to distinguish him.

The author is strictly a sportsman. He does not affect to be either a painter or a poet. The rocks and woods of the romantic scenery through which he marches are simply covers for game or natural screens for the advancing marksman. We could have wished a little more catholicity of enjoyment—that he had sometimes been less of a sportsman and more of a tourist, and that he had attempted for his own craft something in the genial and picturesque spirit of gentle Isaac Walton. The cases, however, are hardly parallel. The stalker—especially in such a country—has little leisure; in fact his eye is as completely preoccupied in his search for the proper object for his rifle as that of a marksman moving through a country in occupation of the enemy's tirrailleurs. It is, in its own way, as anxious and engrossing an advance; and the habit of concentration, it would seem, after a week or so, becomes so intense that the mind of the sportsman, even in his tent or stretched on his blanket, is still tracking the game and providing for the certainty of his shot. The writer shows, however, that he possesses powers of general observation and lively description, though he seems to grudge their exercise, as so much time and attention diverted from his legitimate calling.

On the whole, the "Rifle in Cashmere" is a fresh, stirring book. No man with even the latent instincts of a sportsman can travel over its pages without catching something of the writer's enthusiasm. He never tires. The necessities of nature—life itself he holds cheap in comparison with a good day's stalking, or an exciting trial of quickness and courage with a wounded and infuriated bear. Like every thorough sportsman he is something of a naturalist, and notes the habits of the animals with whom he has to deal with a keen eye and a sure memory. Those who design at any time to explore, rifle in hand, the country he has visited, and which is every year becoming more and more frequented by British sportsmen, will do well to study this bright, practical, and well-filled volume: to them it is as much a necessity as their tent or their "battery." But all who enjoy a good day's march over mountain and through woodland, relieved every now and then by a clever piece of stalking and a sportsmanlike rifle-shot, and can relish an infusion of danger akin to the excitement of outpost warfare, into the ordinary adventures of our moors, mountains, and forests, will read these pages with intense relish.

"KANGAROO-LAND" affords us a sketchy but forcible picture of Australian life, by one who "congratulates himself on having graduated in the colonial college of endurance"—who has been something more than a spectator of its scenery and society—an actor and a labourer in the thick of the great Australian colonial enterprise, so chequered with adventure, suffering and fortune. We have met with books more picturesque and exciting—though these pages are by no means deficient in life and colour—but with none more palpably stamped with the characters of good faith and accurate observation, and with few written in a healthier and more liberal spirit. "So far from having any thing like a feeling of degradation," says the writer, "when I speak of my labouring life in Australia, I feel conscious of having been raised by it to a higher level, for in it I have learned to separate tinsel from reality; to understand, without any republicanism, the true grounds upon which all men are equal." "The heart is the common level where all meet as brethren; and that is the level whereon, whenever I meet my fellow-men, I have learned, I trust, to meet them on equal terms." This is the true moral of that life of sometimes wild and sometimes dull labour, of topsy-turvy vicissitude, startling intimacies, utter denudation of traditional distinctions and simply conventional advantages, and, above all, of that frank athletic matching of man against man in the up-hill struggle for existence in its rudest forms, its greatest capabilities, and its wildest dangers, which form the conditions of active life in Australia.

It was a three months' voyage out; and all that time they sighted land but once, when becalmed off St. Antonio, one of the Cape de Verde Islands. We allude to this not uncommon incident simply as supplying one of the prettiest specimens of Mr. Polehampton's talent for description:—

> "The island," he says, "was less than a quarter of a mile distant; and very beautiful its outline appeared through the morning haze that enveloped it. Indeed, both it and the sea, as still and clear as glass, with a delicate rosy tinge towards the east, looked beautiful as a dream of the Hesperides. But our hopes of getting ashore, and revelling in a tropical abundance of fruit, were soon dispelled; for we had not been becalmed more than two or three hours when the water near the island lost its glassy smoothness, and became agitated with little waves, just like an island lake when a sudden breeze crisps its surface. The effect of this land-breeze on the water could be seen from the ship some little time before we felt its influence. The contrast between the roughening water and the yet perfectly unruffled surface between the ship and it, was strikingly beautiful, the boundary between the two being well defined, up to the moment when the huge ship—till then so helplessly immovable—inclined gracefully to the breeze, as if instinct with sudden life, like a sea-bird with wings ready spread."

On landing at Sydney, he is immediately struck by the "thoroughly English appearance" of the city and all its belongings. A sprinkling of handsome public buildings, such as the Government House and the Exchange agreeably surprise him. But his predominant impression, from an inspection of the place, is that of a "quiet, steady prosperity," contrasting very strongly and agreeably with his after-experiences of "the uncomfortable money-grasping bustle of Melbourne, where for some time after the gold discoveries, few people seemed to think it worth their while, or indeed to have time to be civil." These English associations and illusions of home were, however, soon and curiously disturbed:—

> "As I sat," he writes, "at the open window in the cool of the evening, overlooking the demesne, I was puzzled as to the origin of a deafening sound, like the noise of an army of watchmen working their rattles vigorously. On inquiry I found that it proceeded from the crickets in the park, which are certainly gifted with more powerful and less pleasing organs of sound than the hearth crickets of England, immortalized by Dickens."

His next point was Newcastle, from whence he set sail for Williamstown, *en route* for Melbourne, in a ship laden with coal and horses, and with a company of fellow-passengers partly diggers, partly scamps, and all uncouth and melodramatic in their get up—"all shaggy hair," says their respectable fellow-traveller; "long beards, moustaches, and jack-boots; altogether not unlike a company of bandits or pirates." On this voyage, one evening, the passengers, playing at cards or otherwise amusing themselves below, were suddenly called on deck by an unusual commotion. There, on hastening forward, they saw a small vessel, very near but still indistinct, for it was already dark, and a driving surge between. "It seemed," says our author, "that we could not, except by a miracle, avoid running her down," in which case all on board must have perished, as the weather would not have permitted the lowering of a boat. "Our ship," he says, "was on the summit of a huge wave, the little vessel in the hollow beneath, and we were breathlessly awaiting the crash, fully expecting that the next moment would send her to the bottom; but providentially no crash came, though we shaved close to her stern." We can quite conceive the "nervous creeping sensation" with which our kindly traveller returned to his cabin.

About the same time a little incident occurred which let a new light in upon our author respecting some of the specialties of Australian character. In the course of their rough voyage many of the horses on board were killed, and, among the number, three belonging to a steerage passenger; whereupon the cabin passengers, touched with pity, subscribed £30 towards making up his loss: upon which, the recipient of the bounty, who turned out to be a richer man than many of the contributors to the fund for his relief, and being moreover, as Mr. Polehampton suspects, an old convict, observed, as he pocketed the money, with a cool chuckle, that "though he didn't want it himself, it would do for a spree," and he and his companions accordingly celebrated a three-days' orgie of uproarious drunkenness in the steerage. We suspect, from the stern epithet "villain," applied to this lost sheep, that the Rev. Arthur Polehampton was among his misguided benefactors.

When Mr. Polehampton reached Melbourne, that city was in the height of the nugget fever, immensely overcrowded, and prodigiously dear and inconvenient. The houses were generally constructed of wood, and of one story only. A crop of handsome stone houses, shops, and public buildings, have since grown up. Then it was little better than a great encampment of wooden huts—no foot pavements—the streets ankle-deep, and often deeper, in mud—no efficient drainage. "I have seen," he says, "some of the streets after two or three days' rain, with streams of water, too wide to jump, on either side, and the lucky owners of drays reaping a golden harvest by carting people across at six pence a head." Such as it was, the town just then was swarming with diggers "down for a *spree*," driving about in carriages hired at incredible prices, and accompanied by expensively but gaudily dressed women. "I recollect one woman, a bride, I imagine," writes our traveller, "dressed in light satin, and a profusion of gold chains, bracelets, &c.; her face, hands, and feet being ludicrously out of character with her finery." The momentary wealth and utter improvidence of these diggers pouring into Melbourne with but one idea in common, that of getting rid of their gold in the most expeditious way, quite upset all commercial precedents and proprieties. Nothing could exceed the cool insolence of the Melbourne tradespeople to their customers. "On several occasions," he writes, "I have seen articles thrown rudely on a counter, and if a selection was not made from them, the customer was roughly told to get what he required elsewhere." Among other things we learn that change for a sixpence was never given, nor indeed expected, that coin having much the same market value as farthings at home. The pactœlian inundation, so magical and monstrous, which for a time quite turned the heads of the Melbourne shopocracy, has, since then, receded, and the ascendancy of the yard-measure and the scissors been moderated. "Increased competition, and an occasional glut of goods in the market, have, since then," says our author, "brought them, in a very great measure, to their senses. Diggers, too, can now purchase nearly all they require on the gold-fields at about the same rate as in Melbourne; and as there are all kinds of places of amusement, such as theatres, &c., on the diggings, they frequently prefer enjoying their holidays there to Melbourne." The social confusion produced by the then state of things was as startling as the commercial. The whole theory and practice of subordination had vanished—"in many respects," we are told, "the relative positions of master and servant were changed," or, rather, *reversed*. Servants were in such request, and so disposed to try their luck at the diggings, that no master presumed to find the slightest fault, and all had to treat them with the most ceremonious indulgence and respect. "In fact," says Mr. Polehampton, "there was a regular Saturnalia going on." In one case a master was deserted by all his men, who went to the diggings in a body, so that he was compelled to leave his business, and went to the diggings himself, where he was glad at length to accept the situation of cook to his former servants. Highly-coloured tales of terror were in circulation of the prowess and ferocity of the "bush-rangers" of the Black Forest. These awful reports were encouraged by the gunsmiths, who were driving a prodigious trade upon the apprehensions of the "new chums," the slang denomination of fresh arrivals from the parent country. Mr. Polehampton was offered £10 by a gunsmith for a pair of pistols, for which he had given but thirty shillings in Liverpool. The smallest Colt's revolver brought from £30 to £40. The alarm produced by the rumours before alluded to produced corresponding preparations on the part of the "new chums."

> "The new arrivals, some of whom had possibly never fired a gun in their lives, frequently armed themselves to such an unnecessary extent, that they might very easily have been mistaken for bush-rangers themselves, equipped as they often were, not only with guns and pistols, but also with daggers or long knives, and wearing jack-boots and huge beards, by way of imparting a ferocious aspect to their countenances."

These measures were not always, however, successful. The anecdote which follows savours of the old English comedy and long-bow. We may reasonably apprehend, however, that it is, at least, founded on fact.

> "The bush-rangers were not always to be duped by appearances; and I knew of one well-authenticated case, in which a party of ten, armed *cap-à-pie*, were stopped by one unarmed bush-ranger, at whose order they all laid down their guns, which he discharged; and having made them give up their money, contemptuously returned, and allowed them to go on their way."

He found, indeed, the standards of fashion—like nearly every thing else here—inverted. The ambition of these "new chums," especially the younger ones, to pass for "old hands" in the colony; and the elaboration of their toilet, and the affectations of their vocabulary toward this end, curiously illustrate the arbitrary character of fashion, as well as that abject imitativeness and self-diffidence, in which the worship of the *mode* has its springs.

> "They endeavour to gain this point by all manner of expedients—by encouraging the growth of their beards and moustaches to a prodigious length, as well as by affecting a colonial style of dress, and wearing dirty, battered, cabbage-tree hats. But their efforts to appear colonial are not always so harmless; and as swearing is an unusually common habit among the colonists, new arrivals often endeavour, and most successfully too, to become proficients in this easily acquired art, and soon add the stock of oaths peculiar to the colony (and *very* peculiar some of them are), to the 'home' vocabulary."

At length our traveller and his comrades are fairly on the march to the Bendigo diggings; their pack-horses loaded "to the last ounce" with tent, flour, bacon, tea, blankets, and other necessaries. The wardrobe was scant and simple enough.

> "I found," he says, "three shirts (one, an outer one, of blue serge), three pair of socks, two pair of moleskin unmentionables, a strong pilot jacket, and a strong spare pair of boots—as much as I could conveniently take with me, and indeed amply sufficient for the primitive life we were about to lead; though such a wardrobe may seem alarming enough to a civilized community, I packed what was not actually in wear in a little oil-skin knapsack, with a small book or two."

They halted for the night only seven miles from Melbourne. The rain descended in torrents, and evening was closing. The tent was pitched; and the first grand difficulty experienced was in lighting their fire. The wood was soaked in rain. Luckily, one of the travellers was practised in the peculiar emergencies of Bush life, and rescued them from the miseries of a fireless bivouac.

> "He gathered a quantity of gum-tree leaves, which contain a great proportion of gas, and are sometimes used in Australia in the manufacture of gas, where coal is not to be had, and placed over them all the dead wood we could find about; he then stripped some bark from the side of a *stringy bark*-tree, least exposed to the rain, made a miniature fire with it, on a shovel, under shelter of the tent, to the great annoyance of our eyes and nostrils, and placed it under the pile of wet fuel and gum leaves outside; and, after a little perseverance, we soon had a roaring fire, to which we added, from time to time, huge logs, as large as two of us could carry, from the surrounding forest."

The great prime necessary of artificial existence thus supplied, the tired party were soon cheered by the music of a singing kettle, and soothed into a sense of comfort by tobacco-pipes, and those "pannikins" of hot tea, which are the chief luxury and strength of the Australian traveller and digger. Seated within their snow-white tent, with the cheerful glare of the bonfire outside, and these comforts to employ them, the party experienced a novel sense of enjoyment, heightened by the rattle of the rain upon the impenetrable canvas, the roaring of the wind, and the groaning of the huge trees above them.

> "What a cozy little oasis our tent presented for the storm to beat upon! The sense of comparative comfort being rather enhanced than otherwise by the apprehension that it might be but very short-lived; that a stronger gust than ordinary might prove at any moment too much for the tent ropes, which as yet held the ground pretty well, though straining greatly. All our hopes for the time were centred in them, as a sailor in his cable, when anchored on a lee-shore. Several times, as a blast every now and then swept down upon us with a roar, like the concentrated fury of many wild beasts, making the very ground shake under us, and bringing large branches here and there crashing to the ground, we thought it impossible that the tent could withstand it any longer."

Rope and canvas, however, stood it out gallantly, and the night was safely passed—the first under canvas, in the wilderness—with that sense of adventure and independence which has so great a fascination for the beginner. Notwithstanding all these *agremens*, however, Mr. Polehampton, it is admitted, was not much troubled with sleep during the hours passed on this occasion in his blanket. Excitement may possibly have contributed; but the result is mainly referable to a very peculiar concert, with which for the first time he was regaled.

> "As the last cloud departed, and left the moon shining steadily, a Babel of voices from curious wild animals and birds commenced; such as, I should imagine, is seldom heard out of Australia—most uncanny sounds. First there was a groundwork noise of frogs, unlike any thing ever heard in England. This was accompanied by a sound, at an interval of a second or so, like that produced by pulling the string of a violoncello; and a loud regular tapping, like a carpenter hitting a thin board with a hammer. Now and then this concert was enlivened by the indescribably disagreeable squeal of the wild cat, which must be heard to be duly appreciated. Any further attempt at sleep was out of the question. There were other noises, but the above were the most prominent, and continued unceasingly till dawn, at the first streak of which the 'voices of the night' ceased by degrees, and a neighbouring laughing jackass—as the bird is called—began a sort of subdued derisive chuckle, soon swelling to apparently uncontrollable laughter; then his mate's voice joined in,—for they generally frequent some one tree in pairs,—and the two laughed in concert, till they appeared to be quite convulsed; when, seemingly exhausted, the laughter died away as gradually as it had begun. By this time all the birds in the bush were awake—as well they might be—uttering their various cries and notes; for in Australia, no birds, that I ever heard, have any sustained song as in Europe, though the notes of some of them are musical enough."

He tells us that the voice of the laughing jackass is a most efficient substitute for the "cock's shrill clarion," and so we can well believe, except perhaps in heroic poetry, where the exchange would sometimes produce odd effects. Some of these strange notes and noises were, however, very sweet and pleasant: as for instance, he tells us—"When it was about time for our midday halt, the welcome tinkling of the sheep-bell-like note of the bell-bird, announced the presence of water; for this bird always takes up its residence near some stream or swamp." While the rest of the party were employed in pitching the tent, unloading the horses, and lighting the fire, the sportsmen of the company would wade through the swamp, whenever the halt was made in the vicinity of one, in pursuit of wild duck, and seldom returned without several brace. These, with the parrots and cockatoos they had shot, they stewed into a mess worthy of the caldron of Meg Merrilies. As we are upon the culinary shifts of this march to the diggings, the reader may be curious to know what is, in Australian Bush life, the approved substitute for that chief necessary of man's daily life—bread. The method described by Washington Irving, as in use among the hunters of the American prairies—a strip of extemporized dough twisted round a stick and so toasted at the fire—is quite unused here.

> "During this journey," he says, "I became initiated into the mysteries of damper-making, which is performed thus:—A large

fire is made of dead-wood, and while this is burning, a quantity of flour is kneaded in a large shallow tin dish, or upon a piece of bark, into a round cake about a couple of inches thick, and of a diameter proportionate to the number of eaters. When the fire has burnt down, the hot ashes are taken away with a shovel, and the damper placed on the cleared spot, and covered up again with ashes. It requires turning once, and generally takes from half an hour to three-quarters before it is baked."

There is another sort of bush-bread, a make-shift resorted to in emergencies, when the damper would be too tedious in baking; this is made of the same sort of dough as the damper, but very thin, and formed into cakes about the size of an ordinary sea-biscuit. They require little more than a minute to bake.

And now a few words about the scene presented by the track they were pursuing:—

"The whole route to the diggings, though it lay through what had been, but a few months before, pathless forest, was changed by the gold mania to quite an animated scene. It was impossible to go a mile without passing or meeting travellers. All sorts of conveyances,—from the go-a-head four-horse American van recklessly driven, and the heavily laden bullock or horse dray, to the hand-cart with a team of men harnessed to it,—thronged the track. Those who could not afford to pay for the carriage of their swags, were content to stagger under a load of blankets, picks, and shovels, tin pots, and pannikins. In swampy districts we often came upon drays in difficulties, bogged in the mud up to their axletrees, obliging the drivers to unload, and dig the earth from the wheels, starting again after a delay of an hour or so, only to fall into the same trouble, perhaps a hundred yards further on, often in sight of the scenes of similar recent disasters. . . . I noticed, or fancied a considerable contrast in expression in the faces of those who were going to or returning from the diggings, characteristic of their relative positions: the former, as a rule, having the resolute mien of men determined to do their best to earn fortunes; the latter, if successful, dashing past us on horseback, or in light cars, with the exulting or satisfied look consequent on success; or, if unsuccessful, as was much more often the case, creeping wearily along on foot, in garments that bore the stains of weeks or months' unsuccessful toil, frequently as they met us, obligingly treating us with observations disparaging the diggings, and calculated to damp our spirits to the level of their own."

Travellers who go unfurnished with tents are accustomed to sleep under their waggons, throwing over them a tarpaulin which reaches to the ground. This practice, however, has been, on many occasions, attended with a singular and horrible misadventure. After continued rain the soil, in many places, becomes a mere quag, the surface of which is hardened by the hot sun sufficiently to bear the weight even of a heavily laden waggon in passing, but incapable of sustaining the steady pressure of a stationary one. In such cases "the wheels sink imperceptibly till the body of the dray crushes the sleepers." He mentions that he knew himself a case of the kind which resulted fatally.

Having passed through the dreaded Black Forest without adventure, except for the appearance of three well-mounted bandits, who, however, gave them no annoyance, they reached the Bendigo diggings. One evening, about the close of October, entering them near the Kangaroo Gully, "to which a rush had lately taken place,"

"Rain was falling on our arrival," he writes, "and the wet, dripping, well-like holes, and the mud-covered figures of the diggers emerging from them, presented no very charming prospect to a new hand. I have known instances of men going up to the diggings with the most magnanimous resolution never to leave them till they had filled their pockets with gold, upon whose untried courage the mere first sight of these holes, with the earth thrown up like huge mole-hills all round them, acted as a damper, and caused them to retreat without even putting a pick to the earth."

They chose the vicinity of the Kangaroo Gully for the site of their operations, and having pitched their tent, while two of his "mates" were looking after the horses, and another completing the interior arrangements of the tent, he undertook to fill a kettle from a creek only three hundred yards distant:—

"On my return," he says, "I was utterly puzzled as to which was our particular tent among the numerous similar ones. I wandered about, feeling rather ridiculous; for, of course, it was of no use whatever to ask the way, one tent having but little to distinguish it from another. Once or twice, on putting my head into a tent I thought *must* be my own, I got a volley of oaths and abuse for the intrusion; and once a pistol was cocked and pointed at me. The daylight had almost gone, and the light from the numerous fires before the tents only added to my confusion. As no one could help me, I did not care to betray the fact that I had lost myself so close to home, which seemed to me absurd enough—though it was by no means an unusual event on the diggings, especially at night, when the hundreds of fires were enough to mislead anybody. . . . Presently the evening fusilade of guns and pistols from nearly every tent on the diggings commenced; here and there some extravagant fellow firing off a six-barrelled revolver, by way of letting all night-prowlers know what they might expect if they went near him. Now and then some savage watch-dog would make a rush at me, or as I stumbled over the tent ropes in the darkness, I received threats and cursings from within."

In fact, he had nearly despaired, and was beginning to imagine, he says, that he was doomed to be a sort of shore-going Flying Dutchman, ever wandering near his tent, kettle in hand, but never able to find it, when, happily, he recognised the voice of one of his mates quite near, and found that he had been close to his tent for a full quarter of an hour. Next night another of the party similarly lost his way, and spent the entire night in wandering about. His description of the diggings is lively and characteristic :—

"Imagine," he says, "thousands of tents, like an irregular encampment, interspersed with innumerable heaps of earth, like large mole-hills, that have been thrown up from the surrounding holes. Further, imagine these tents and mole-hills scattered over hill and dale for a distance of about seven or eight miles long by two or three broad, the store-tents distinguished by gaily-coloured flags, imparting at a little distance a fair-like aspect to a locality bare enough in itself, as every tree on the diggings, and for some distance round, is soon cut down for fire-wood, &c.; but on a nearer approach the bustle and work that is everywhere going on, and the dusty forms of the diggers, in red and blue shirts, for the most part bearded like brigands, the perpetual noise of picks and shovels, the splashing sound of puddling the earth in large tubs, the rattling of the cradles in which the earth is washed after the puddling process, soon dispel all ideas of its being like a fair. Everybody looks earnest and absorbed in the engrossing work in hand; far too busy to give any but the shortest answers to any casual inquirer, unless, indeed, he happen to come upon a digger who has emerged from the lower regions of the earth, for a few minutes' smoke and rest."

Sellers of lemonade and ginger-beer, at a shilling a glass, tempted the hot and dusty diggers here and there; and everywhere the same rule prevailed—no time to be lost in haggling about prices. At the stores all was stir and bustle; and there the proprietors were not only vendors, of course at high profits, of all sorts of commodities, but purchasers of gold —£2 17*s.* 6*d.* being the average price of gold at the diggings, which brought about £4 in England.

"Now and then, as one strolls along, a peep at the interior of some tent more blessed than ordinary, reveals quite a domestic scene, due to the presence of the digger's wife and family, with perhaps a favourite cat—a rare and precious animal on the diggings at the time I am speaking of, though common enough after an enterprising individual imported a dray-full from Melbourne, which he sold at a pound a head."

The Commissioner, just then, rides up, in a sort of military undress, followed by his orderly, a mounted policeman, at a respectful distance, in a neat cavalry uniform. "The Commissioner is the chief personage on the diggings," our author reminds us, "and his horse picks his way delicately, as if duly aware of the honour he derives from conveying so important an official." This little pageant was the first and last "bit of dignified importance" which he encountered at the diggings, where, as a rule, every thing is carried on with a rude and rough republicanism of equality, labour, and frugality:—

"Here and there, at very rare intervals, a garden of a few feet square, formed round a tent, enriched with a few precious exotics, such as wall-flowers or primroses, is suggestive of home; or the cackling of hens reminds one that eggs are to be had at something like a guinea a dozen. Not seldom, when passing a tent, of which the owners are absent, unsuspicious of danger, a dog of ferocious aspect, apparently like Goldsmith's traveller, dragging 'a lengthening chain' behind, darts forth from a harmless-looking barrel with a growl and bark that makes one anxious for the fate of one's heels."

At the diggings, with the exception of meat, all provisions were at famine prices; a loaf of bread cost six shillings; potatoes were never dreamt of, except by successful diggers or the most reckless spendthrifts. Plum-pudding, familiarly termed "duff" at the diggings, was, however, a regular Sunday dish. The scarcity of water was, perhaps, the worst privation in the list. To wash a shirt cost as much as to buy one. The consequence was, that when a change became indispensable—and we fear very seldom till then—gentlemen bought new ones, and threw away the old. "Personal cleanliness was quite out of the question, except in the rainy season, water being as scarce as it was bad."

While they were "on the Bendigo" the rush to the Ovens diggings, which were about one hundred and fifty miles to the north, commenced. The Bendigo was soon drained of at least half its population, and in some parts began to look quite deserted. There was no resisting the contagion; and our author and his "mates" were soon on the march again. Arrived, not without adventure, at the Goulbourn, a broad rapid stream, they found the ferry-boat broken, and a great concourse of diggers, marching on the same route, arrested at the near bank until the repairs of the boat, an affair of some days, should be completed. The mercantile spirit of the caravan at once broke out, and all who had more provision of any sort than they needed, extemporized stores for the sale of their surplus, realizing enormous profits from the necessities of those whose supplies began to run short. "One fellow sold execrable rum at two shillings a nobbler, *i.e.*, half a wine-glass." And as no cattle stores were within reach, all had to depend entirely on their guns; and our author and his party made themselves happy with their old gipsy messes of parrots, cockatoos, and wattle-birds. On the bank of this river, however, he parted company with his "mates," not on the pleasantest terms, and resolved to return alone to the Bendigo. A moderate supply of flour, tea, sugar, and bacon formed his "provend," and making his swag up in two bundles, his blankets hanging over his shoulders behind, he hung one knapsack in front and the other at his back. The first night of this retrograde movement he passed alone in the bush:—

> "The weather," he says, "was unusually hot, and the mosquitoes were terribly annoying. As a protection against their attacks, I was obliged to cover myself, before trying to go to sleep, from head to foot, in a thick horse-rug. I was nearly suffocated, for I could not leave even my nose bare with impunity, and I was in a fever from the heat. My enemies were legion. The very air seemed made of them; and I could not make furtive attempts to get a draught of fresher air than was to be had beneath the horse-rug, without inhaling them. Whenever I turned for relief from lying in one position, I could hear them buzzing in myriads from where they had settled on the rug, and in spite of all my precautions they would frequently find some undefended *point d'appui*, forcing me to throw the rug off in despair, and shake it frantically at them, that they might not close in upon me before I had time to wrap myself up afresh. Thanks to the mosquitoes, I did not feel in the least conscious of my lonely situation in the bush that night —a night I shall never forget, it seemed so long "

The sufferings of "new hands," from this class of tormentors, and even worse, are soon mitigated by habit, and in a little while they learn to tolerate, and even forget their "inevitable presence." There is a sand-fly, no bigger than a pin's head, which selects the eye-lids as the point of attack, causing them to swell so as completely to close the eyes. This affliction, temporary only, is technically called "blight" by the colonists. In addition to these, the bugs are there a gigantic and pre-eminently bloodthirsty race; and the fleas, it is wholly impossible to expel entirely from a house by any amount of care and cleanliness. "I have seen," he says, "the ground alive with them, in the Bush, on sandy soil, far away from any habitation." The colonial receipt for getting them out of blankets is to spread them near an ant's nest, "the inhabitants of which will soon clear them of every trace of fleas, returning themselves to their nest about sunset." These ants, too, are in immense variety as well as numbers, and are themselves no mean contributors to the sum of misery that awaits the travellers in the Bush from the insect tribe. One of the worst of these is a small black ant, the most vindictive of the race, which works with nippers and sting, inserting the latter where the pincers have made a wound. Another, still more diminutive and offensive, spoils all provisions it can reach by the peculiarly disgusting smell and taste it communicates. As he marched alone through these solitudes, sometimes surprised by the skeleton of a huge prostrate tree, looking like the sprawling shape of some monstrous pre-Adamite brute or lizard; sometimes nearly stumbling upon a real reptile, two feet long, and constantly hailed by the strange cries of unknown birds and parrots, unseen among the branches, sounding like, "no, you won't," or "be quick;" a stupendous sense of solitude, and a longing for human society came upon him.

These bird-talkings, he says, used to remind him of the "Arabian Nights." He came upon a strange-looking object, "which," he says, "at a little distance I took for a stump of a small tree, capped with an inverted tin dish, such as diggers use to wash out their gold in; but it turned out to be a man, who greeted me after the fashion of the Bush, with a 'good day, mate!' and without ceremony, rose and walked along with me." He turned out to be precisely upon the same errand, having parted with his comrades and resolved on a return to the Bendigo. So, though our traveller did not much like him at first, they "got sociable over their tobacco and tea," and a partnership was the consequence. It did not thrive, however, and Mr. Polehampton, with his health a good deal impaired, determined to direct his steps to Melbourne, in search of some more suitable employment. One evening a party of Scotchmen happened to encamp near him, and our solitary traveller asked permission to join their company for the night, but was surlily repelled. This, however, except when danger was apprehended, was very much the reverse of the rule in the Bush. "I was told," he says, "of a party of successful diggers stopping several days at a small Bush inn, and not only drinking to excess themselves, but stationing two men in the road, with orders to compel every passer by to come in and drink, under the penalty of forfeiting their day's pay of ten shillings each, in case they allowed any one to pass without stopping." It was another solitary journey, of about five days' duration, and he arrived at his destination with exactly one shilling in his pocket. There was no danger, however, of starving. There was manual work of all sorts enough, and to spare, at Melbourne, and the wages, even taking the price of provisions into account, and remembering that a mere crib to sleep in cost thirty shillings a week, were liberal enough.

The author's experience of colonial life and labour was tolerably extensive. He tried, in addition to digging, road-making, or rather stone-breaking—a profession pleasantly designated in Australia as "wielding the geologic hammer"—house-painting, in which he made a signal failure; quarrying, wood-cutting in the forest, charcoal-burning, brickmaking, haymaking, fishing, sheep-washing, reaping, and threshing. His road-making experiences are about the pleasantest of his Australian recollections. The wages of a stone-breaker, when he tried that occupation, were "ten shillings a day—tent, wood, and water found." The overseer "very civilly tried to encourage him" by pointing out several highly respectable persons whose hammers were clinking away merrily at the roadside. There was a barrister, a surgeon, and a mate of a ship:—

> "However successful they might have been in their former callings, they certainly were not very expert at their present occupation. The barrister was a small, middle-aged man; his legs trembled as he struggled along with a small barrow-load of stones. The medical man's eyes were afflicted with blight, and he wore blue spectacles, which did not give him a very workmanlike appearance. He was seated near a heap of large stones, from which, at long intervals, he abstracted one; and after regarding it curiously for some moments, as a geologist might a pet specimen, and coquetting with it a little, he would give it a gentle tap or two with his hammer, as if it went to his heart to break it. There was nothing remarkable about the mate, except that he seemed sore-footed, and generally disinclined to move about, and bore a suspiciously strong family likeness to that useful individual met with on board most ships, viz., 'Jimmy Ducks,'—so called, as doubtless most of my readers are aware, because the poultry is under his especial charge. The two first-mentioned individuals had really been in the law and physic line. The other men were also taking things more or less easily, and the overseer evinced no disposition to drive them!"

Engaged in the same occupation,

he became acquainted with a poor little Russian officer, who had spent the few hundred pounds he possessed, on his arrival in the colony, in living like a gentleman, which he undoubtedly was, at an expensive hotel while waiting for some gentlemanlike employment to turn up. Here he took a wife, and failing to find employment more suitable to his education, he was ultimately very glad to try his hand at breaking stones. The forlorn pair arrived late at night, having lost their way. "The husband was not bigger than many a boy of thirteen, and very slight; the wife was tall, slight, and very pale and delicate looking, dressed in a whitish Indian muslin, fashionably cut, and a white sun-bonnet; altogether rather ghostlike. Her dress had rather a draggled appearance—as well it might; her shoes were too fragile for any thing but a town pavement in fine weather; and if I remember rightly, she had lost one of them." He was soon discharged, and afterwards got employment as a shepherd; but was dismissed from that also as incorrigibly useless. These poor people were, no doubt, "representative" persons, and exemplified the mortifications and miseries of a class of unsuitable immigrants, only, we fear, too numerous in Australia.

It would not do to turn our backs upon this "kangaroo-land" without paying our personal respects to the race who give it its title. On his way to the Mount William diggings, he began, while in the Bush, to suspect that he had missed his way:—

> "I sat down on a fallen tree to consider a bit, assisting my deliberations by smoking a pipe of tobacco. Presently I was rejoiced to hear sounds as of horses approaching at a gallop. I 'cooeed' (a cry borrowed from the blacks) as loud as I could, but received no answer, and I concluded that the horses were riderless; but that idea was soon dispelled by the galloping ceasing abruptly, far more so than when a number of horses pull up of their own accord. But, then, if there were riders, why did they not answer my repeated calls? The galloping continued, beginning and stopping again, till I began to think about the tales I had read in my boyhood of haunted forests, for the sounds were getting near, and still I could see no signs of horses through the trees. At length they got fainter, and presently ceased altogether. Having finished my pipe, and made up my mind in what direction to go, I was just in the act of rising, when I heard something moving behind me, and turning round, I was startled at seeing half-a-dozen kangaroos, drawn up in a regular file, a few yards off. They regarded me steadfastly for a few moments, till I broke the embarrassing silence, and they retreated respectfully a little farther off, when they again turned right-about-face, and looked at me as before. They thus kept increasing the distance between us, at each halt turning round to look at me, till I put an end to their visit by rising and yelling at them, when they hopped away as only kangaroos can, covering, I should think, twenty-five feet of ground at each jump. They retreated in a line, the tallest kangaroo leading. The mystery was solved, for several kangaroos hopping together make a noise just like the galloping of horses."

A few years have wrought great changes in the colony. The perpetual influx of skill and energy, the rapid construction of roads, the accumulation of wealth, and the organization of commercial relations have done wonders in mitigating many of the worst features of the picture we have just been contemplating. But the lesson which it so forcibly teaches is still true in the main; and many intending emigrants will do wisely to lay it to heart. For manual labour, skilled and unskilled, the colony affords an almost inexhaustible market, as well as special and even prodigious opportunities of progress. But these advantages and opportunities are themselves the growth of an obviously defective civilization, which altogether denies to the higher gradations of intellect and attainment a proportionate position. Aesthetics are, of course, peremptorily ignored by a population governed by the coarsest standards and educated to the vulgarest pursuits and the grossest habits. England is pouring her handicraftsmen and day labourers into the colony; and in the sort of race for which all adventurers alike are there inevitably entered, the man who is trained to physical exertion and endurance, and to manual dexterity, will speedily leave his refined and educated competitors nowhere.

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE OF A HAUNTED HOUSE.

[The Editor of the UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE submits the following very remarkable statement, with every detail of which he has been for some years acquainted, upon the ground that it affords the most authentic and ample relation of a series of marvellous phenomena, in nowise connected with what is technically termed "spiritualism," which he has anywhere met with. All the persons—and there are many of them living—upon whose separate evidence some parts, and upon whose united testimony others, of this most singular recital depend, are, in their several walks of life, respectable, and such as would in any matter of judicial investigation be deemed wholly unexceptionable witnesses. There is not an incident here recorded which would not have been distinctly deposed to on oath had any necessity existed, by the persons who severally, and some of them in great fear, related their own distinct experiences. The Editor begs most pointedly to meet *in limine* the suspicion, that he is elaborating a trick, or vouching for another ghost of Mrs. Veal. As a mere story the narrative is valueless: its sole claim to attention is its absolute truth. For the good faith of its relator he pledges his own and the character of this Magazine. With the Editor's concurrence, the name of the watering-place, and some special circumstances in no essential way bearing upon the peculiar character of the story, but which might have indicated the locality, and possibly annoyed persons interested in house property there, have been suppressed by the narrator. Not the slightest liberty has been taken with the narrative, which is presented precisely in the terms in which the writer of it, who employs throughout the first person, would, if need were, fix it in the form of an affidavit.]

WITHIN the last eight years—the precise date I purposely omit—I was ordered by my physician, my health being in an unsatisfactory state, to change my residence to one upon the sea-coast; and accordingly, I took a house for a year in a fashionable watering-place, at a moderate distance from the city in which I had previously resided, and connected with it by a railway.

Winter was setting in when my removal thither was decided upon; but there was nothing whatever dismal or depressing in the change. The house I had taken was to all appearance, and in point of convenience, too, quite a modern one. It formed one in a cheerful row, with small gardens in front, facing the sea, and commanding sea air and sea views in perfection. In the rere it had coach-house and stable, and between them and the house a considerable grass-plot, with some flower-beds, interposed.

Our family consisted of my wife and myself, with three children, the eldest about nine years old, she and the next in age being girls; and the youngest, between six and seven, a boy. To these were added six servants, whom, although for certain reasons I decline giving their real names, I shall indicate, for the sake of clearness, by arbitrary ones. There was a nurse, Mrs. Southerland; a nursery-maid, Ellen Page; the cook, Mrs. Greenwood; and the housemaid, Ellen Faith; a butler, whom I shall call Smith, and his son, James, about two-and-twenty.

We came out to take possession at about seven o'clock in the evening; every thing was comfortable and cheery; good fires lighted, the rooms neat and airy, and a general air of preparation and comfort, highly conducive to good spirits and pleasant anticipations.

The sitting-rooms were large and cheerful, and they and the bed-rooms more than ordinarily lofty, the kitchen and servants' rooms, on the same level, were well and comfortably furnished, and had, like the rest of the house, an air of recent painting and fitting up, and a completely modern character, which imparted a very cheerful air of cleanliness and convenience.

There had been just enough of the fuss of settling agreeably to occupy us, and to give a pleasant turn to our thoughts after we had retired to our rooms. Being an invalid, I had a small bed to myself—resigning the four-poster to my wife. The candle was extinguished, but a night-light was burning. I was coming up stairs, and she, already in bed, had just dismissed her maid, when we were both startled by a wild scream from her room ; I found her in a state of the extremest agitation and terror. She insisted that she had seen an unnaturally tall figure come beside her bed and stand there. The light was too faint to enable her to define any thing respecting this apparition, beyond the fact of her having most distinctly seen such a shape, colourless from the insufficiency of the light to disclose more than its dark outline.

We both endeavoured to re-assure her. The room once more looked so cheerful in the candlelight, that we were quite uninfluenced by the contagion of her terrors. The movements and voices of the servants down stairs still getting things into their places and completing our comfortable arrangements, had also their effect in steeling us against any such influence, and we set the whole thing down as a dream, or an imperfectly-seen outline of the bed-curtains. When, however, we were alone, my wife reiterated, still in great agitation, her clear assertion that she had most positively seen, being at the time as completely awake as ever she was, precisely what she had described to us. And in this conviction she continued perfectly firm.

A day or two after this, it came out that our servants were under an apprehension that, somehow or other, thieves had established a secret mode of access to the lower part of the house. The butler, Smith, had seen an ill-looking woman in his room on the first night of our arrival ; and he and other servants constantly saw, for many days subsequently, glimpses of a retreating figure, which corresponded with that so seen by him, passing through a passage which led to a back area in which were some coal-vaults.

This figure was seen always in the act of retreating, its back turned, generally getting round the corner of the passage into the area, in a stealthy and hurried way, and, when closely followed, imperfectly seen again entering one of the coal-vaults, and when pursued into it, nowhere to be found.

The idea of any thing supernatural in the matter had, strange to say, not yet entered the mind of any one of the servants. They had heard some stories of smugglers having secret passages into houses, and using their means of access for purposes of pillage, or with a view to frighten superstitious people out of houses which they needed for their own objects, and a suspicion of similar practices here, caused them extreme uneasiness. The apparent anxiety also manifested by this retreating figure to escape observation, and her always appearing to make her egress at the same point, favoured this romantic hypothesis. The men, however, made a most careful examination of the back area, and of the coal-vaults, with a view to discover some mode of egress, but entirely without success. On the contrary, the result was, so far as it went, subversive of the theory ; solid masonry met them on every hand.

I called the man, Smith, up, to hear from his own lips the particulars of what he had seen ; and certainly his report was very curious. I give it as literally as my memory enables me :—

His son slept in the same room, and was sound asleep ; but he lay awake, as men sometimes will on a change of bed, and having many things on his mind. He was lying with his face towards the wall, but observing a light and some little stir in the room, he turned round in his bed, and saw the figure of a woman, squalid, and ragged in dress ; her figure rather low and broad ; as well as I recollect, she had something—either a cloak or shawl—on, and wore a bonnet. Her back was turned, and she appeared to be searching or rummaging for something on the floor, and, without appearing to observe him, she turned in doing so towards him. The light, which was more like the intense glow of a coal, as he described it, being of a deep red colour, proceeded from the hollow of her hand, which she held beside her head, and he saw her perfectly distinctly. She appeared middle-aged, was deeply pitted with the small-pox, and blind of one eye. His phrase in describing her general appearance was, that she was "a miserable, poor-looking creature."

He was under the impression that she must be the woman who had been left by the proprietor in charge of the house, and who had that evening, after having given up the keys, remained for some little time with the female servants. He coughed, therefore, to apprize her of his presence, and turned again towards the wall. When he again looked round she and the light were gone; and odd as was her method of lighting herself in her search, the circumstances excited neither uneasiness nor curiosity in his mind, until he discovered next morning that the woman in question had left the house long before he had gone to his bed.

I examined the man very closely as to the appearance of the person who had visited him, and the result was what I have described. It struck me as an odd thing, that even then, considering how prone to superstition persons in his rank of life usually are, he did not seem to suspect any thing supernatural in the occurrence; and, on the contrary, was thoroughly persuaded that his visitant was a living person, who had got into the house by some hidden entrance.

On Sunday, on his return from his place of worship, he told me that, when the service was ended, and the congregation making their way slowly out, he saw the very woman in the crowd, and kept his eye upon her for several minutes, but such was the crush, that all his efforts to reach her were unavailing, and when he got into the open street she was gone. He was quite positive as to his having distinctly seen her, however, for several minutes, and scouted the possibility of any mistake as to identity; and fully impressed with the substantial and living reality of his visitant, he was very much provoked at her having escaped him. He made inquiries also in the neighbourhood, but could procure no information, nor hear of any other persons having seen any woman corresponding with his description.

The cook and housemaid occupied a bed-room on the kitchen floor. It had whitewashed walls, and they were actually terrified by the appearance of the shadow of a woman passing and repassing across the side wall opposite to their beds. They suspected that this had been going on much longer than they were aware, for its presence was discovered by a sort of accident, its movements happening to take a direction in distinct contrariety to theirs.

This shadow always moved upon one particular wall, returning after short intervals, and causing them extreme terror. They placed the candle, as the most obvious specific, so close to the infested wall, that the flame all but touched it; and believed for some time that they had effectually got rid of this annoyance; but one night, notwithstanding this arrangement of the light, the shadow returned, passing and repassing, as heretofore, upon the same wall, although their only candle was burning within an inch of it, and it was obvious that no substance capable of casting such a shadow could have interposed; and, indeed, as they described it, the shadow seemed to have no sort of relation to the position of the light, and appeared, as I have said, in manifest defiance of the laws of optics.

I ought to mention that the housemaid was a particularly fearless sort of person, as well as a very honest one; and her companion, the cook, a scrupulously religious woman, and both agreed in every particular in their relation of what occurred.

Meanwhile, the nursery was not without its annoyances, though as yet of a comparatively trivial kind. Sometimes, at night, the handle of the door was turned hurriedly as if by a person trying to come in, and at others a knocking was made at it. These sounds occurred after the children had settled to sleep, and while the nurse still remained awake. Whenever she called to know "who is there," the sounds ceased; but several times, and particularly at first, she was under the impression that they were caused by her mistress, who had come to see the children, and thus impressed she had got up and opened the door, expecting to see her, but discovering only darkness, and receiving no answer to her inquiries.

With respect to this nurse, I must mention that I believe no more perfectly trustworthy servant was ever employed in her capacity; and, in addition to her integrity, she was remarkably gifted with sound common sense.

One morning, I think about three or four weeks after our arrival, I was sitting at the parlour window which looked to the front, when I saw the little iron door which admitted into the small garden that lay between the window where I was sitting and the public road, pushed open by a woman who so exactly answered the description given by Smith of the woman who had visited his room on the night of his arrival as instantaneously to impress me with the conviction that she must be the identical person. She was a square, short woman, dressed in soiled and tattered clothes, scarred and pitted with small-pox, and blind of an eye. She stepped hurriedly into the little enclosure, and peered from a distance of a few yards into the room where I was sitting. I felt that now was the moment to clear the matter up; but there was something stealthy in the manner and look of the woman which convinced me that I must not appear to notice her until her retreat was fairly cut off. Unfortunately, I was suffering from a lame foot, and could not reach the bell as quickly as I wished. I made all the haste I could, and rang violently to bring up the servant Smith. In the short interval that intervened, I observed the woman from the window, who having in a leisurely way, and with a kind of scrutiny, looked along the front windows of the house, passed quickly out again, closing the gate after her, and followed a lady who was walking along the footpath at a quick pace, as if with the intention of begging from her. The moment the man entered I told him—"the blind woman you described to me has this instant followed a lady in that direction, try to overtake her." He was, if possible, more eager than I in the chase, but returned in a short time after a vain pursuit, very hot, and utterly disappointed. And, thereafter, we saw her face no more.

All this time, and up to the period of our leaving the house, which was not for two or three months later, there occurred at intervals the only phenomenon in the entire series having any resemblance to what we hear described of "Spiritualism." This was a knocking, like a soft hammering with a wooden mallet, as it seemed in the timbers between the bedroom ceilings and the roof. It had this special peculiarity, that it was always rythmical, and, I think, invariably, the emphasis upon the last stroke. It would sound rapidly "one, two, three, *four*—one, two, three, *four*;" or "one, two, *three*—one, two, *three*," and sometimes "one, *two*—one, *two*," &c., and this, with intervals and resumptions, monotonously for hours at a time.

At first this caused my wife, who was a good deal confined to her bed, much annoyance; and we sent to our neighbours to inquire if any hammering or carpentering was going on in their houses, but were informed that nothing of the sort was taking place. I have myself heard it frequently, always in the same inaccessible part of the house, and with the same monotonous emphasis. One odd thing about it was, that on my wife's calling out, as she used to do when it became more than usually troublesome, "stop that noise," it was invariably arrested for a longer or shorter time.

Of course none of these occurrences were ever mentioned in hearing of the children. They would have been, no doubt, like most children, greatly terrified had they heard any thing of the matter, and known that their elders were unable to account for what was passing; and their fears would have made them wretched and troublesome.

They used to play for some hours every day in the back garden—the house forming one end of this oblong inclosure, the stable and coach-house the other, and two parallel walls of considerable height the sides. Here, as it afforded a perfectly safe playground, they were frequently left quite to themselves; and in talking over their days' adventures, as children will, they happened to mention a woman, or rather the woman, for they had long grown familiar with her appearance, whom they used to see in the garden while they were at play. They assumed that she came in and went out at the stable door, but they never actually saw her enter or depart. They merely saw a figure—that of a very poor woman, soiled and ragged—near the stable wall, stooping over the ground, and apparently grubbing in the loose clay in search of something. She did not disturb, or appear to observe them; and they left her in undisturbed possession of her nook of ground. When seen it was always in the same spot, and similarly occupied; and the description they gave of her general appearance—for they never saw her face—corresponded with that of the one-eyed woman whom Smith, and subsequently as it seemed, I had seen.

The other man, James, who looked after a mare which I had purchased for the purpose of riding exercise, had, like every one else in the house, his little trouble to report, though it was not much. The stall in which, as the most comfortable, it was decided to place her, she peremptorily declined to enter. Though a very docile and gentle little animal, there was no getting her into it. She would snort and rear, and, in fact, do or suffer any thing rather than set her hoof in it. He was fain, therefore, to place her in another. And on several occasions he found her there, exhibiting all the equine symptoms of extreme fear. Like the rest of us, however, this man was not troubled in the particular case with any superstitious qualms. The mare had evidently been frightened; and he was puzzled to find out how, or by whom, for the stable was well-secured, and had, I am nearly certain, a lock-up yard outside.

One morning I was greeted with the intelligence that robbers had certainly got into the house in the night; and that one of them had actually been seen in the nursery. The witness, I found, was my eldest child, then, as I have said, about nine years of age. Having awoke in the night, and lain awake for some time in her bed, she heard the handle of the door turn, and a person whom she distinctly saw—for it was a light night, and the window-shutters unclosed—but whom she had never seen before, stepped in on tiptoe, and with an appearance of great caution. He was a rather small man, with a very red face; he wore an oddly cut frock coat, the collar of which stood up, and trousers, rough and wide, like those of a sailor, turned up at the ankles, and either short boots or clumsy shoes, covered with mud. This man listened beside the nurse's bed, which stood next the door, as if to satisfy himself that she was sleeping soundly; and having done so for some seconds, he began to move cautiously in a diagonal line, across the room to the chimney-piece, where he stood for a while, and so resumed his tiptoe walk, skirting the wall, until he reached a chest of drawers, some of which were open, and into which he looked, and began to rummage in a hurried way, as the child supposed, making search for something worth taking away. He then passed on to the window, where was a dressing-table, at which he also stopped, turning over the things upon it, and standing for some time at the window as if looking out, and then resuming his walk by the side-wall opposite to that by which he had moved up to the window, he returned in the same way toward the nurse's bed, so as to reach it at the foot. With its side to the end wall, in which was the door, was placed the little bed in which lay my eldest child, who watched his proceedings with the extremest terror. As he drew near she instinctively moved herself in the bed, with her head and shoulders to the wall, drawing up her feet; but he passed by without appearing to observe, or, at least, to care for her presence. Immediately after the nurse turned in her bed as if about to waken; and when the child, who had drawn the clothes about her head, again ventured to peep out, the man was gone.

The child had no idea of her having seen any thing more formidable than a thief. With the prowling, cautious, and noiseless manner of proceeding common to such marauders, the air and movements of the man whom she had seen entirely corresponded. And on hearing her perfectly distinct and consistent account, I could myself arrive at no other conclusion than that a stranger had actually got into the house. I had, therefore, in the first instance, a most careful examination made to discover any traces of an entrance having been made by any window into the house. The doors had been found barred and locked as usual; but no sign of any thing of the sort was discernible. I then had the various articles—plate, wearing apparel, books, &c., counted; and after having conned over and reckoned up every thing, it became quite clear that nothing whatever had been removed from the house, nor was there the slightest indication of any thing having been so much as disturbed there. I must here state that this child was remarkably clear, intelligent, and observant; and that her description of the man, and of all that had occurred, was most exact, and as detailed as the want of perfect light rendered possible.

I felt assured that an entrance had actually been effected into the house, though for what purpose was not easily to be conjectured. The man, Smith, was equally confident upon this point; and his theory was that the object was simply to frighten us out of the house by making us believe it haunted; and he was more than ever anxious and on the alert to discover the conspirators. It often since appeared to me odd. Every year, indeed, more odd, as this cumulative case of the marvellous becomes to my mind more and more inexplicable—that underlying my sense of mystery and puzzle, was all along the quiet assumption that all these occurrences were one way or another referable to natural causes. I could not account for them, indeed, myself; but during the whole period I inhabited that house, I never once felt, though much alone, and often up very late at night, any of those tremors and thrills which every one has at times experienced when situation and the hour are favourable. Except the cook and housemaid, who were plagued with the shadow I mentioned crossing and recrossing upon the bedroom wall, we all, without exception, experienced the same strange sense of security, and regarded these phenomena rather with a perplexed sort of interest and curiosity, than with any more unpleasant sensations.

The knockings which I have mentioned at the nursery door, preceded generally by the sound of a step on the lobby, meanwhile continued. At that time (for my wife, like myself, was an invalid) two eminent physicians, who came out occasionally by rail, were attending us. These gentlemen were at first only amused, but ultimately interested, and very much puzzled by the occurrences which we described. One of them, at last, recommended that a candle should be kept burning upon the lobby. It was in fact a recurrence to an old woman's recipe against ghosts—of course it might be serviceable, too, against impostors; at all events, seeming, as I have said, very much interested and puzzled, he advised it, and it was tried. We fancied that it was successful; for there was an interval of quiet for, I think, three or four nights. But after that, the noises—the footsteps on the lobby—the knocking at the door, and the turning of the handle recommenced in full force, notwithstanding the light upon the table outside; and these particular phenomena became only more perplexing than ever.

The alarm of robbers and smugglers gradually subsided after a week or two; but we were again to hear news from the nursery. Our second little girl, then between seven and eight years of age, saw in the night time—she alone being awake—a young woman, with black, or very dark hair, which hung loose, and with a black cloak on, standing near the middle of the floor, opposite the hearthstone, and fronting the foot of her bed. She appeared quite unobservant of the children and nurse sleeping in the room. She was very pale, and looked, the child said, both "sorry and frightened," and with something very peculiar and terrible about her eyes, which made the child conclude that she was dead. She was looking, not at, but in the direction of the child's bed, and there was a dark streak across her throat, like a scar with blood upon it. This figure was not motionless; but once or twice turned slowly, and without appearing to be conscious of the presence of the child, or the other occupants of the room, like a person in vacancy or abstraction. There was on this occasion a night-light burning in the chamber; and the child saw, or thought she saw, all these particulars with the most perfect distinctness. She got her head under the bedclothes; and although a good many years have passed since then, she cannot recall the spectacle without feelings of peculiar horror.

One day, when the children were playing in the back garden, I asked them to point out to me the spot where they were accustomed to see the woman who occasionally showed herself as I have described, near the stable wall. There was no division of opinion as to this precise point, which they indicated in the most distinct and confident way. I suggested that, perhaps, something might be hidden there in the ground; and advised them digging a hole there with their little spades, to try for it. Accordingly, to work they went, and by my return in the evening they had grubbed up a piece of a jawbone, with several teeth in it. The bone was very much decayed, and ready to crumble to pieces, but the teeth were quite sound. I could not tell whether they were human grinders; but I showed the fossil to one of the physicians I have mentioned, who came out the next evening, and he pronounced them human teeth. The same conclusion was come to a day or two later by the other medical man. It appears to me now, on reviewing the whole matter, almost unaccountable that, with such evidence before me, I should not have got in a labourer, and had the spot effectually dug and searched. I can only say, that so it was. I was quite satisfied of the moral truth of every word that had been related to me, and which I have here set down with scrupulous accuracy. But I experienced an apathy, for which neither then nor afterwards did I quite know how to account. I had a vague, but immovable impression that the whole affair was referable to natural agencies. It was not until some time after we had left the house, which, by-the-by, we afterwards found had had the reputation of being haunted before we had come to live in it, that on reconsideration I discovered the serious difficulty of accounting satisfactorily for all that had occurred upon ordinary principles. A great deal we might arbitrarily set down to imagination. But even in so doing there was, *in limine*, the oddity, not to say improbability, of so many different persons having nearly simultaneously suffered from different spectral and other illusions during the short period for which we had occupied that house, who never before, nor so far as we learned, afterwards were troubled by any fears or fancies of the sort. There were other things, too, not to be so accounted for. The odd knockings in the roof I frequently heard myself.

There were also, which I before forgot to mention, in the day-time, rappings at the doors of the sitting-rooms, which constantly deceived us; and it was not till our "come in" was unanswered, and the hall or passage outside the door was discovered to be empty, that we learned that whatever else caused them, human hands did not. All the persons who reported having seen the different persons or appearances here described by me, were just as confident of having literally and distinctly seen them, as I was of having seen the hard-featured woman with the blind eye, so remarkably corresponding with Smith's description.

About a week after the discovery of the teeth, which were found, I think, about two feet under the ground, a friend, much advanced in years, and who remembered the town in which we had now taken up our abode, for a very long time, happened to pay us a visit. He good-humouredly pooh-poohed the whole thing; but at the same time was evidently curious about it. "We might construct a sort of story," said I (I am giving, of course, the substance and purport, not the exact words, of our dialogue), "and assign to each of the three figures who appeared their respective parts in some dreadful tragedy enacted in this house. The male figure represents the murderer; the ill-looking, one-eyed woman his accomplice, who, we will suppose, buried the body where she is now so often seen grubbing in the earth, and where the human teeth and jaw-bone have so lately been disinterred; and the young woman with dishevelled tresses, and black cloak, and the bloody scar across her throat, their victim. A difficulty, however, which I cannot get over, exists in the cheerfulness, the great publicity, and the evident very recent date of the house." "Why, as to that," said he, "the house is *not* modern; it and those beside it formed an old government store, altered and fitted up recently as you see. I remember it well in my young days, fifty years ago, before the town had grown out in this direction, and a more entirely lonely spot, or one more fitted for the commission of a secret crime, could not have been imagined."

CYRUS REDDING'S NEW NOVEL.

THIS novel* is written, like all that have proceeded from the same hand, with a purpose. A strong, rugged moral is deeply chiselled in the work. The warning is directed against what is assumed to be the master-vice of the present above all other ages—the absorbing pursuit of money. The tale is one of simple but massive interest, which, without effort or jerkiness, carries the reader forward with a powerful and sustained momentum, and leaves behind it the solemn and salutary impression of an eloquent homily upon the apostolic entreaty—"Beware of covetousness, which is idolatry"—idolatry in a sense more literal than unreflecting men will admit—of that monstrous sort, beside, which exacts human sacrifices.

Mr. Redding writes with a bold and studied defiance of the popular taste for "the impossible, or that which lies within its confines." We think that he overestimates the prevalence of this appetite, and, perhaps, carries his animosity to it a little too far. He places upon his canvas characters copied from life with a literality of detail, and constructs his plot with a stern disregard of art, and a sturdy loyalty to the actual and even commonplace, which occasionally try the reader and jeopardize his success. "Painful images, exciting contrasts, and monstrous exaggerations," says Mr. Redding, "made with a view to exciting a 'sensation,' to quote the cant phrase of the hour, will, in no great time, cease to startle the public, and a reaction will ensue from the violent stimulus that preceded." We believe that the school to which he refers is itself the expression of a reaction from that no less popular school of "novels without heroes," and stories without plots, and nearly without incidents, of which Mr. Thackeray has given and is giving to the world so many conspicuous, and, we must allow, very delightful examples. It must not be forgotten that a perfect novel is as much a work of art as a perfect play or a perfect poem. True to nature each must be. But whatever lies within the precincts of nature—no matter how wild, how terrible, how ludicrous—provided the conditions of human action and passion sanction it, is honestly at the disposal of the writer. This theory, besides, of strict adherence to nature, by which is meant the self-limitation of the writer to the ordinary round of common existence, is only partially applied in the particular novel before us, as well as by the whole school to which we have alluded. Mr. Redding's ordinary conversation, judging by his mental powers and attainments, is very much above the level of that of average men and women of the class he describes. Yet it is plain that he has elaborated his dialogue with great care and discrimination, and thrown into the common talk of his ordinary characters the very cream and point of the thought and learning of his own remarkable and highly cultivated mind. This is the sort of violence to nature which most easily escapes detection; but is, after all, a more serious and even extravagant one than those groupings of nature's monsters or grotesques, and that glaring mosaic of paradoxical and horrible incidents which are yet individually and separately justifiable by actual precedent. We hold that, like the drama and the epic, or to corroborate our position by a kindred illustration —like statuary, painting, and the histrionic art—the laws of prose fiction have their conventional standard more highly strung than nature, and though in harmony with it, still based essentially upon an exaggerated ideal.

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* "All's Well that Ends Well." A Simple Story. In Three Volumes. By Cyrus Redding. London: T. Cautley Newby. 1862.

Mr. Redding's opening scene is laid on the banks of the picturesque Tamar, near the tombs of the last of the Comneni, whose misfortunes are--we had almost said *sung*—by Gibbon, in that sad, solemn, and harmonious epic which forms so fine an episode in his "Decline and Fall." Our author's descriptions of natural scenery have about them, at times, almost the glow and poetry of Turner. His first childish view of the sea, from his bed-room window, on a bright summer morning, is a fine specimen of vigorous and almost enthusiastic description.

> "'What sort of a look out is there from the window?' I sprung out of bed, eager to gratify my curiosity, and took a peep at what was without. It was the sea, the glorious sea, seen for the first time! How that moment impressed itself upon my memory! I gazed, and gazed again. The first glance was overpowering. There lay the majestic ocean, reposing in the warm sun like a plain of burnished gold, calm, boundless, patriarchal; it was overwhelming, I looked with all my eyes again, and again, speechless with admiration. I had no power of youthful language to express what I felt. I was a long time putting on my clothes from my impatience in viewing, and re-viewing the outstretched picture, while almost adoring its beauty. I succeeded at last in completing my dress. It was past low water, and as the tide had began to flow, the ripple broke on the sand at no great distance from my window with a gentle murmur. I threw up the sash and the fresh air enlivened me in an extraordinary manner. The tiny border of snow-white waves that broke in successive furrows upon the hard sandy shore attracted my special attention. It was all novel to my boyish gaze, and then how impressive it was! I determined to go out and approach near the water on the beach. The golden hue of the sea soon changed to a dark blue colour, clouds were passing before the sun's disc, for it had now attained a greater elevation. Then, too, I first observed the small snowy sails of the vessels in the distance, moving like messengers from an unknown world, with whom no mortal could communicate. After I had, as already observed, huddled on my clothes, I rushed down stairs, unbolted the front door, and in a moment found myself looking into the pellucid water over the yellow sand! I felt it invigorated me to a degree I cannot describe. The buoyant springiness of youth seemed increased to a boundless measure, from the contemplation of what I saw before me, a most striking novelty to my inexperienced vision. There I stood delighted until I heard my name called from the door of the house by a servant sent after me. I was discovered to be missing, and with a gentle chiding from Aunt Rachel was suffered to take my breakfast."

Very fine, too, is his painting of that noble Plymouth panorama a little further on. But we cannot afford to diverge from the persons and incidents of this peculiar and highly-interesting tale, to what, after all, are but its decorative accessories.

Treville house, the seat of the Treville family, and birthplace of his heroine, Alexia Treville, is thus sketched:—

> "Treville House overlooked beautiful scenes, pleasant meadows, deep woods, convoluted waters, ancient mansions, towering granite rocks and crested heights; having too a mine of silver in sight upon the opposite shore, where, once 'stranger to pain,' my 'careless boyhood strayed.' What a world of revolutions is ours in any thing, that has or has not sensation, or in living as well as dead matter."

The Trevilles are an unpretending but affluent country family, sociable and refined, and sound and perhaps somewhat Quakerly in morals. Alexia's sister, Mary, singularly beautiful, though blind, is the heroine of a very pretty under-plot, not without instruction, but unlike the main current of the story, which is turbid and wintry in the way less of warning, than of touching and cheery example.

This girl is very sweetly and carefully drawn, and described with a delicacy, a charm, and a feeling, which many a young and even eloquent lover might sigh for in vain. The metaphysical problems of blindness are frequently though unavowedly glanced at in the scenes in which she bears a part. Her dreams, for instance, she thus relates:—

"'Mary Treville is no metaphysician, and yet I dream strange things. Sometimes I long for past days again in some far country, and fancy I am sitting by the cedars of Lebanon. All at once I seem to be surrounded with holy men of bygone times in the East, but before I can commence conversation all vanishes, and I find myself by the Tamar side, where persons are standing in the translucent wave in shapes like leopards, covered with feathers, and yet I know not the aspect of the Tamar, or of a leopard. Fancy has a marvellous power of making things to suit names.

. . . . . .

"'Yes, I have dreamed so fearfully of what I have heard in the day. Oh, that terrible dream I had, after hearing my dear father and a friend of his talk of men who believed there was no Deity!

"'There is always an old church and dead bodies in our ghostly tales, so I imagine, for so far I had retrograded to childhood again. I was seated on a fine evening in summer on a grassy mound in front of a church, where I thought I fell asleep. It was near midnight when I awoke, and looked around. I dreamed that I could see as well as you can. All at once the tombs seemed to open; the dead, like shadows, arose, and wandered from their resting places, unaffected by the power of gravitation. They passed and repassed in the air above and around me. The objects became dim, the air thick, and the earth trembled. The church shook, and there was a commotion high above my head. Lightnings, or what I fancied to be such, flashed forth now and then. Terror came over me, but not of a common character. Some of the shades I saw seemed to be those of ancient men. Something, of which I could not make out the form, impressed my mind as being a dial, by the way in which I have heard it described. I thought it was time; and a huge human hand pointed up from it; the arm and shoulder involved in a cloud; a finger pointed to a circle, on which was written "eternity." Near it was a fathomless gulf, dark, silent, horrible, into which a solitary drop of water falling minute after minute alone broke the silence. Shapes continually passed along the edge of the abyss: army after army in number; but at a certain distance they seemed to dissolve into nothing, or become a part of a stagnant fluid below, mingling and disappearing. On a sudden the church and tombs vanished, and strange accents were muttered. The air became serene. All I had seen changed to what I imagine you call mirage, for several of the things I name were only similitudes of the images in my fancy of what I had heard of before, and probably incorrect resemblances, but they were as the truth to me, and so I describe them. Was it not strange for a blind girl's sleep to conjure up such senseless images? My mother tells me the sun is nearly a hundred millions of miles away. I do not know what a million is; I should say an inconceivable number of miles. Methinks I am, what you call, buried alive, like those who go away to the land of sepulchres, and never return —that guideless and dark country I think I see when dreaming. But I am impatient in my complaining.'"

This, of course, opens a metaphysical question. The dreams of the blind—those, we mean, who have never known the gift of vision—must, of course, be as colourless and blank as their waking experiences. To us who enjoy the blessing of sight it is difficult to imagine how a dream can possibly be furnished, without any of those phenomena which constitute the staple of our own. "Mary's" dream here borrows the language and imagery of that sense of which she is destitute, and yet without which, or some analogous sense, if such there be, it is nearly impossible to conceive how the continuity of the impressions she describes, could have been sustained. Mr. Redding is far too acute an observer to have failed to detect this special difficulty in a subject of inquiry on which he has obviously expended so much care, and amassed, as it would seem, such a fund of observation. We cannot, however, pause to discuss the question thus suggested in reviewing a work of fiction, whose story and characters have a primary claim upon our attention.

Orwell, an officer, after the usual approaches and uncertainties, at length offers his hand to Alexia, who accepts it with the approbation of her family; and the young people, after the first rapture of their affianced bliss has subsided, put their heads together in a confidential and prudential sort of way, perhaps more commendable than common, upon the question of ways and means. The result is a finding, in the first place, that Captain Orwell's income is by no means sufficient for the maintenance of a family, should such a contingency arrive; and secondly, that he had better sell out of the army, and invest his capital in trade which will, no doubt, yield a revenue sufficient for all the future requirements of the happy couple. This momentous step is forthwith taken, and the sometime Captain turned merchant, and leagued with an experienced partner, merges in the London firm of Orwell and Watson. In this new state of existence, his habits, companions, and above all, his objects, undergo a corresponding and very decided change. The story is not one, as we have already hinted, of exciting incident. It is, in the main, a grim and painful mental development; all the more impressive for the simplicity of its setting, and its tremendous consistency with nature. There is great skill in the selection of a man of Orwell's character, on which to exhibit the action of the solitary pursuit of money, and the special corruption and ultimate destruction of the finer traits which it seldom fails to bring about. Underlying a character which was not, as a whole, unamiable, and would, under favourable circumstances, have possibly improved, are discernible that deep-seated self-esteem, that arrogance and impatience, which are sure to grow bitter in disappointment, and offensive in success, and both in succession await him.

In his courtship Orwell strikes us simply as a placid, gentlemanlike, and somewhat grave military man, with a latent vein of that selfishness which is so general a vice of the military character. We follow him now from the picturesque and pleasant scenes of his courtship, and the *agremens* of his forsaken military position, into wedlock, trade, and London. He has entered the arena with a hard and greedy competition, and the struggle monotonous, severe, and unrewarded, rapidly tells upon his character:—

"From competition and similar causes, he did little more than clear his household expenses. In all events he was unable to lay by very little towards the future support of his family, should his decease take place prematurely, as he feared might be the case. His anxiety in this respect had an effect upon his temper. He grew morose, and Alexia suffered much at beholding upon her husband's part a complete change of disposition.

"'You are not well to-day, Orwell,' she sometimes remarked in the kindest manner.

"He replied too often in a rough and sharp tone, and thus drew tears from her eyes. Her kindly nature made every indulgence for his cares, and yet it did not avail.

"'It is strange,' she would observe, 'Orwell is so changed, his conduct sometimes almost breaks my heart. A term must come to all this, Orwell, my dear, you are not the same man you used to be.'

"'I know it. I would I had died in the military service. I am lost, my speculations are not paying. Nothing wears out manhood like those continued disappointments. How much better my pay and fixed income from the interest of my property, than this uncertain gain. Speculation in profit and loss, what is it but the trial of fortune that makes or mars at a throw of the dice box? Trade, as now operative, is wholesale gambling.'

"Alexia turned pale; there was a despairing look about her husband sometimes which made her shudder. She saw that his mind was in a state of perturbation.

"'Orwell, what is the matter? go take a walk on the grass plot, you are not well.'

"'Yes, I am well enough in health, but I have had a disappointment this morning in town; things will be all right to-morrow when I have slept off my headache. Don't press me any farther, I do not feel inclined to talk.'"

The details of this process of deterioration are more exactly traced in what follows:—

"'My dear Orwell, you are not well, do not go down into the city to-day. Remain here, and leisure will bring you about.'

"'I must go into town. I cannot remain here with my fingers idle. I have something more to do than play with the children, and listen to your small talk. Some women never think what a purgatory they make their husbands endure by their conversation about nothing, when their minds are harassed by business.'

"'Indeed, my dear Orwell,' replied his wife, with moistened eyes, 'I meant nothing more than to signify you wanted rest, and recommended you should take it; why treat me thus rudely? There was a time when you would not have acted so, but that time is now gone by, I fear for ever.'

"In place, as before, of soothing his wife, and withdrawing his harsh expression, he went off to the city without wishing her the customary 'good morning.' The pride and idleness in which he had indulged when a soldier, now came in contrast with the cares and plain sailing of the man of trade. He drew invidious comparisons, which soured his disposition, naturally too prone to give way to humour. He imagined within himself, that he had taken a wrong step in marrying, and was unfeeling enough to signify that he repented of it, during certain outbursts about his affairs. He did not consider the effect upon another of such a line of conduct, but indulged his own unsocial temper—for unsocial it had become, and as the bad spirit increased, it was spurred onward by the reflection that he had exchanged the pride and military uniform of the soldier for trade, perhaps before long too for the humiliating position of being pilloried in the Gazette. With this disposition, a certain waywardness affected him. He did and said things of which he repented afterwards; and then fell into an ill-temper with himself because he had not been more under the restraint of reason."

The tide turns, after a while, and Orwell, borne high upon it, floats on to fortune. But the change does not involve a restoration to himself; but only a change in the evil phenomena which, springing perennially from the "root of all evil," accommodate themselves to altered circumstances, some thriving in sunshine, some in shadow; and all, in their varieties of odiousness, equally poisonous:—

"The merchant or man of trade, who with prudence gains to spend, is a useful and honourable member of society; but what is the mere money grubber, but the dead, while living, to all generous emotions and high feelings. It was to this last order of persons that Orwell, as he grew older, was plainly tending. As the more generous instincts diminish, those of avarice increase. Thus the individual of a fine liberal temper originally, changes and becomes the most odious member of the class of which he forms a part."

His assumption of rule in domestic details quite beside his province, and his gross favouritism with regard to his children; supporting, with an offensive perversity, his daughter Bessy in her insolent resistance to her mother's authority; his systematic reserve and domineering temper, all tend to aggravate, in their prosperity, the conjugal discords sown in their hours of anxiety and depression. "It is a fearful thing," says Mr. Redding, "to consider how trivial are the causes which originate marital distrust, and terminate in open quarrels between those who have previously lived in harmony together."

A curious trait in Orwell, now that he has acquired wealth, is a sort of cowardice, which the author, we venture to assert, from actual observation, ascribes to the man of bank stock and consols.

"The truth was, his property by this time had become so large, that it occupied his whole waking attention. Any diversion from that which thus absorbed him, threw his mind out of its equilibrium, and being unusual, caused alarm. He could not deviate from that beaten track of life, which, in his present pursuit, was more uniform and undeviating than any other. He was no more of a hypocrite than any other man who followed trade, and thought of nothing besides; and if he led the diurnal life of the Sir Balaam of Pope, it was no more than in the common pursuance of the vocation, by which, from his peculiar conformation, he worked himself into nervousness.

"Even in his counting-house he began to have a dislike to being alone, not from any consciousness of evil on his own part, but from the dread of some attack upon his wealth, through himself. He never remained without one or two clerks were present. He imagined he might be personally assaulted, and so far in one instance did this fear prevail, that, in the face of a gentleman who had come to him on business, when he was alone, that he shut and bolted the door of the inner room, which was his private office. The stranger had but just landed from Ostend, and looked very little like the foreigner he really was. At another time a visitor came in, and beginning to fumble in his pocket for a letter of introduction, Orwell thought he was going to draw forth a pistol, and seizing a blunderbuss with a spring bayonet affixed, that he recently kept near the table at which he sat, alarmed the stranger by taking up a defensive attitude. The reflection that he was the possessor of wealth of which he might be robbed, had for the moment no regard to the fact, that it was not within a stranger's reach."

Like other forms of hypochondria, this illusion grows.

"He fancied every one had a design to overreach or rob him, not in relation to money alone, but in the most ordinary transactions. He thought that even his children sought to circumvent him, and this by no means improved his temper, nor was it calculated to lessen his family discomforts."

The story of Orwell's illness and failing mind is throughout powerful and awful, and bears pre-eminently that singular stamp of reality which is with more or less distinctness impressed upon the entire narrative.

"If Heaven shows its scorn of riches by bestowing them on the least worthy, as some philosophers assert, in the way of a general, rather than a particular rule, it is certain that men in the position of Orwell, who grasp at unlimited accumulation, will seldom omit to avail themselves of unjustifiable arts to accomplish their object, and in turn those arts will react.

"Whether any thing of the foregoing nature burdened the mind of Orwell, or it was the result of feeble mental organization, it was too evident that his mind had begun to fail him.

"'Alexia,' he observed, one morning at breakfast, 'what did you do with the sum your father remitted to you yesterday? Had I not better have it, and purchase consols?'

"Money from my father, Orwell? What money?'

"'The seven hundred he sent up.'

"'You are not awake—I have had no money remittance from my father.'

"'You certainly have had.'

"He then seemed to meditate a moment, as if he was endeavouring to recollect himself, at length articulating—

"'It is gone, gone from here,' pressing his forehead with both his hands, 'that money, yes, that remittance from somebody. It is gone, gone from here. No, it was not from your father.'

"Several other tokens of mental exhaustion were exhibited, in like manner, from time to time, of which his friends could make nothing; but all led to the conclusion that a slight aberration of intellect had temporarily occurred. Again medical treatment was called in, under the influence of which he improved a little, and then again he appeared upon the point of a relapse. A journey, or sea voyage, was once more recommended, or in fact any thing which would have the effect of withdrawing him from his business, which was quite safe in the hands of his partner, if he could be brought to think so.

. . . . .

"He still said that he could see nothing but ruin in leaving home.

"'It is madness; every thing will go sixes and sevens.'

"'You will be compelled to remain indoors at home, and your affairs in the city will be then as much without you as if you were a hundred miles away.'

"'No, I should then be able to go into town upon any pressing occasion. I won't leave my home. I should soon be ruined.'

"This fear of being ruined became a leading reference."

Still chained to his oar, the slave of money, to the sacrifice of life and hope, must toil on to the last.

"His medical attendants represented his position, and the tendency there was to a relapse. They advised him to arrange his affairs.

"For once he took their advice in good part, during an interval of clear-mindedness, and did what was required. But there was no change in his diurnal conduct towards his family. His business seemed to engross his whole thoughts. When the probability appeared of his being obliged to take a forced leave of all that engrossed his attention, and before all, of his fortune, he showed how forgetful of the result he was, by his wilful devotion to his calling. Somewhat dull, and plodding, he must still have perceived that his life hung upon a thread, yet he kept to his previous habits."

Orwell's last moments are in gloomy keeping with the passages we have quoted.

"Again and again, upon his senses reviving, that were even then flickering in the socket, Orwell referred to his business, and once made his wife send for Watson, in order that he might give explanations to the sick man, who when he came, had forgotten he had expressed a desire to see him.

"He raised himself up suddenly, and requested to have his clothes brought to him, saying he felt well, and should dress. It was that revival before death, which so often occurs; for at the same time he was picking the sheets with his unconscious fingers, and his features had grown sharp.

"'Alexia,' he said, and then missed the connecting word, 'Strange! Strange!'

"'What is strange, Orwell?'

"He paused, and seemed as if trying to collect himself, but with a distortion of feature that made Alexia ring the bell for assistance, thinking his last moment had arrived; but he rallied again, and regarding his wife fixedly, faintly articulated—

"'Where am I?'

"'In your own house, my dear,' Alexia replied, as well as her tears would suffer her.

"'Is my balance sheet struck—is all right?'

"'Yes, Orwell, all is right,' she replied, merely to please him, as she was aware he knew not what he said.

"'Then, 'tis well—well—all right—well—well! It is over. I shall sleep now; the balance is struck!'

"These were his last words; and with a heavy sigh, that seemed to exhaust the little power of palpitation left in his heart, he expired."

There are scenes and characters in abundance; some in strange and repulsive harmony, and others in graceful and sunny contrast with the central figure of the tableau, and amidst which the painful features of the picture come out with a rugged and awful fidelity. Of the former class is the group presented in the dingy apartment of the city usurers, Grapple, Pinchard & Co. The retainer who opens the door for Orwell shows thus in the foggy light, as he stands upon the lobby:—

> "This Cerberus of Grapple, Pinchard & Co., was a poor shrivelled-looking creature, that scarcely seemed to belong to the human family—one on whom famine appeared to have written fiend."

The firm are next seen:—

> "There was so much of the sinister in their appearance, that it could not be said of them, 'Chancery Courts were kept in every breast.' One of the partners, plausible looking, and about forty years of age, dressed up nearly to the mode, specious, and smirking, with an oblique squint, was evidently well skilled in making the worse appear the better reason. He played the part of spokesman in his business, and articulated with insolent confidence. The elder was a grave, taciturn, dirty-complexioned man, nearly if not quite three score years old, with a bony, hooked, and warted nose, small, deep-set, dark, crafty eyes, covered with spectacles, and an expression of impertinence with avarice, which could not be mistaken. The muscles of his face were rigid and unchanging, his hair black and gray intermingled. As he bent over the notes he was counting, in full consciousness of his moneyed importance, he was the personification of the Mammon-worshipping slave—the true metropolitan advertising miser and money lender.
>
> "'Why, Mr. Orwell,' said the younger of the two seated at the table, 'you do not want our assistance. We only work on a limited scale—eight per cent., you know, and brokerage.'
>
> "'Brokerage to discounters; come, Mr. Pinchard, you jest.'
>
> "'Not at all; when such houses as yours seek poor men like ourselves, we must make something extra, by way of bonus.'
>
> "Grapple, the other partner, grinned a sardonic smile of satisfaction at the jest.
>
> "The younger partner continued—'But you do not really want our money. Why don't you go to Johns, Lord & Co.? They are the dons in the discount market.'
>
> "'You are not in earnest, Mr. Pinchard. The house of Grapple, Pinchard & Co., is one of no small merit and modesty, when the partners so undervalue themselves.'
>
> "The elder usurer grinned another of his 'ghastly smiles' at his partner's laboured jocularity.
>
> "'Well then to business, Mr. Orwell. What cash *do* you want?'"

And so, to business they go.

On the other hand, the under-plot, of which the beautiful but blind Mary Treville is the heroine, supplies the softer tints—the sunshine and repose of the landscape. Poetry, like wit, is always young, and we nowhere meet more graceful, pure, and glowing portraits of feminine beauty than in the romantic pages of this marvellous octogenarian. The book, too, has all the other evidences of young and healthy mental action. It teems with clear and original observation, and is rich in those suggestive phrases which condense thought, and imply, rather than fully express, the results of a long, varied, and sagacious experience. Mr. Redding, too, knows life thoroughly, and can describe it without one particle of that cynical leaven which belongs not to age but to character. His own is naturally genial, and is toned, moreover, by religion; and he delights rather in the study of human nature, than in the dreary anatomy of mere worldliness. Neither is he *laudator temporis acti;* but in all respects abreast of the age in which he lives and works—as energetic a friend of progress, and as keenly alive to all that passes about him, as a man just entering on active life. He illustrates in the field of letters, as Lord Palmerston does in the richer one of politics, how much error lies in ascribing to age itself the weaknesses engendered by the enervating circumstances with which it often prematurely environs itself. To live and labour—so long as health is spared—among younger men, is the true "*elixir vitæ.*"

Mr. Redding's quick eye has the youthful faculty of discerning a significance in the smallest matters. For instance:—

> "But it must not be forgotten that the family is at breakfast, a meal generally somewhat prolonged, particularly with persons of ease and leisure, who need not hurry their repasts. The man of trade or profession cannot do this; while the individual of easy fortune may almost be known by it. A patrician at breakfast, is to the busy part of mankind, a high exclusive. The man of industry must take his meal early, and count his minutes at the same time, for they are all valuable. The noble consumes half the morning about it, and then wonders how

it happened that the forenoon ran away from him, thanking his idle stars it is gone, for he has just spelled out and out his morning paper. The mechanic takes his breakfast in his workshop, laying down his tools, and pausing over his bread and butter for the space of a half hour; while the labourer washes down his bread and bacon, in the field, with his allowance of beer, lounging upon the upturned furrow."

The dialogue, too, is young and lively—full of animated sketch and thought. Everard, one of those lovers who sicken with hope deferred, thus describes his cool, if not cruel, mistress:—

"'Not so; no, there are women who can't love, and she is one. It is not in their nature. They marry and have families mechanically. They are conjugal statuary, hard, cold, icicles of the sex, in whose composition the capacity for love was omitted by nature. The devil take all the women! I will go off to the Indies. I will climb Chimborazo, and call the volcano my brother and the earthquake my sister. I will let my beard grow, and turn hermit, not from religion, but hatred of women.'"

The whole of the portrait of Aunt Rachel—a maiden lady, somewhat travelled in the vale of years—is racy with individuality, touched with the foibles and small asperities of celibacy, but redeemed with a certain grace and prettiness that leave upon the mind a sense of tenderness and melancholy:—

"Aunt Rachel was the best of her order of ladies, in other words she had never 'wept for her children,' because she never was a mother, still she was apt to make for herself sources of vexation without them. I will not reflect upon her memory so much as to suppose her in voluntary singleness. She had been only a little over nice in selecting, her taste being too refined; and thus every successive offer being declined, in hopes of a better, she had been left the victim of her own fastidiousness. She endeavoured to do all the good in her power in after-life, but it was to be in her own way, for on that point she was scrupulous. I fully believe that among the upright in heart, she had a right to claim Heaven as a heritage with all her foibles. Poor Aunt Rachel! she had been a little too particular in choosing a mate, and the reflection did not soothe her. What was I not indebted to her for kindnesses, sometimes deemed hardships; for instruction, which I should have profited by following; and, in the sordid language of the passing horde, above all, for the moiety of her little fortune, which she bequeathed to me, the other half to my sister Selina!

. . . .

She loved me, too, but I am inclined to think that her state of single blessedness was not such a source of gratification as some single ladies affect it is to themselves. I am certain that when Aunt Rachel led me about in our early excursions to the seaside, none else of her sex being seen with me in public, except a domestic, she sometimes imagined she was taken for my mother, and I for her child. The exact truth can never be known as to whether her extreme delicacy ostensibly, in regard to the male sex, might not thus have been ideally set aside in her mind for the moment. If so, it was a harmless vanity, the wishing to be taken for what all her sex ought to be, whom reason and the benefit of the commonwealth delight to honour. There are times when, with all of us, contravening our apparent satisfaction with our existing state, nature and truth incidentally vindicate themselves."

Aunt Rachel, too, had not quite escaped the special weakness of her sex, in its spinster state, after a certain period of life. She was a little bit stingy, and given to citing frugal proverbs. When, for instance, she gave her little favourite a sixpence, it was always with a caution "to take care of it;" to which injunction she added the proverb—"Penny, whence comest thou? Penny, whither goest thou? Penny, when wilt thou come again?"

"Aunt Rachel had seen forty-five summers go into the 'sere and yellow leaf.' My mother thought, under the rose, how, after that age, Aunt Rachel watered the soup more than was customary. It must be understood in explanation, that when her sister lay in, my aunt was housekeeper, leaving her own smaller domestic cares to take ours. The bread and butter really seemed cut thinner, though there was no stint in the total quantity. Perhaps this is doing Aunt Rachel an injustice, because, though young people will not see it, thrift is an important accomplishment in a world where riches rank before virtue."

The whole of this picture, indeed, is finished with something of the stiff costume and homely pose; but, at the same time, with the clear tints and minute finish of the Dutch school. We may be permitted one glance more, for the sake of the serious lesson it inculcates upon beauty dreaming that its reign is eternal.

"Her age of romance and youthfulness

had passed away. The earliest lover had been dismissed, and the latest had followed. When I first saw her, even then she thought her attractions might secure some one worthy of herself. 'She could wait a little longer,' ever a bad policy. Her hopes were thus not realized. She had, from thinking too well of herself, procrastinated as far as her thirtieth year. After that age census-takers tell us that the chances out of a thousand marriages are only ten. She then got alarmed, and began to think how desolate her future life must pass without conjugality. Yet there came upon her a shrinking sense, she knew not exactly of what, but something like a bashfulness, which she had never felt when younger. She could not do as she once did in laying herself out for a lover. She blushed at the thought, however much she desired to enter in at the matrimonial wicket. Unfortunately no suitor more appeared. Her personal comeliness was on the wane, for no single lady ever conserves her beauty beyond thirty-five years of age, while married women at that age are often highly attractive in person, provided they were so before, but nothing shortens the attractiveness of the female person like the state of protracted maidenhood, which hope, the image of remote good, still deceives."

Another delightful trait of youthfulness in Mr. Redding, is one which is indeed inseparable from the true poetic sense—his love of children.

"Some people feel a repugnance to children, which would be better concealed. The simplicity of childhood, the truthfulness of its steps, its perfect artlessness, its graces, have each a charm for observers possessed of true hearts. Its short-lived reign, the sole enchanted scene of mortal existence, is rich in beauty, pure in intention, and chaste of hue. The fleece, stained by the hand of art, never regains its native purity. Happy indeed is the innocence of the newly born, that grief has never touched, nor conscience troubled:—

'Grief seldom joined with early youth is seen,
Can sorrow be where knowledge ne'er hath been!'

"The little envoy from an unknown region of being, seems to plead for our hospitality, recalling what must have once been our own state of helplessness in the dawn of life, towards which we often turn with a species of melancholy. The eyes glisten, and the heart is heavy when the playfulness of the child exhumes some perished trait of affection long buried by the hand of the inexorable destroyer of all that is dear to us. Who can gaze on a beautiful child and not feel love rekindle in the heart, the love of things most lovable, the tenderness, the admiration, the universal affection of which so much is latent in nature, and even in the Supreme himself, for 'God is love?'"

Very happy and often profound, are those slight reflections which are pleasantly and thickly scattered over his pages. Enjoying the twilight of a sweet summer evening, he remarks, "The dew began to be talked of, for we are ever too assiduous in hunting for things to poison our best enjoyments." Of death he eloquently writes—"The young cannot understand that of which they have had no experience. Those further advanced in age than the little Trevilles often do not comprehend any connexion between themselves and the life-destroying power. Happy ignorance! One of the most enviable allotments of childhood! Why should they fear whose reckoning is unimpeachable! The faint shadow cast by the king of terrors upon the mind in early life, grows deeper and longer as its evening approaches, yet to all it remains a blank mystery, a name, a substantial unsubstantiality, a something between mortal and immortal, a deprivation of the faculty of living dreams, and of being cheated by illusions."

In another place he says, "But I am touching upon forlorn truth, the most despised of earthly things, because it is the most heavenly." Very happy, too, are his phrases, as that in which he describes the conversation of a solid but unappreciated man, "who talked unintelligible sense," and that of a good wife "endeavouring to command by obeying her husband." We instance these as samples of a prevailing characteristic of Mr. Redding's thoughtful, racy, and eloquent style.

Mr. Cyrus Redding is, in some respects, the most remarkable, and in many the most interesting man at present associated with English literature. He has reached, we believe, his eightieth year; and the long and honourable retrospect is literally crowded with important literary labours. More than fifty volumes in history, biography, general literature, and fiction, bear his name. Some of these have been signally successful, and will, like his curious and elaborate "History of Wines," hold a permanent place in our literature. But these form but a small portion of his actual labours. The bare catalogue of them is enough to make the most industrious and facile writer of our day hold his breath and open his eyes in wonder—a wonder enhanced by the vigorous intelligence and observation, and by the minute and diligent inquiry they evince, as well as by the level excellence of their style. Mr. Redding was the real editor—Campbell merely lending his name—and, we may add, the creator also of the *New Monthly Magazine*, one of the most extraordinary successes of its time. From 1820 to 1830 he directed, organized, and, to the extent of about one-third of its contents, actually wrote that magazine. Subsequently, he and Campbell holding mutually the same relation, he established the *Metropolitan*. His occasional pamphlets and other brochures are too many to be counted up within moderate compass. In newspaper literature he has exhibited the same inexhaustible perseverance and Titanic strength. In addition to editing a journal in France, he has established four newspapers, edited six, and written for four others, in England. With his politics of course we cannot be supposed to sympathise. From first to last his heart and his energies have been devoted to what are termed "Liberal principles." He fought for them untiringly in their days of adversity, and has seen them, and with them the party whom he served so well, victorious. But beyond the barren recognition of services, too great and consistent to be questioned, he has never received the smallest token of their gratitude or their justice. We must not be mistaken. The writer of this paper has never had the honour of meeting Mr. Redding; nor has he, through any channel whatsoever, sought an allusion in these pages to his book or to his name. Our mention of him is made strictly in the interest of that literature which he so honourably represents. He is a conspicuous example of the black ingratitude with which prosperous politicians systematically requite the honest and powerful services of literary men. Having served, with indefatigable and unswerving labour, his principles and his party during their forlorn eclipse, he is now—an octogenarian—but the same accomplished servant who gave them the best services of his best days, abandoned in his courageous and honest old age, to close his long life of consistent toil in unintermitting labour. We look at the literary pension list, and we find ladies, picture-dealers, and physicians, of whose works the public have never heard, and persons who have written merely to qualify for the pre-arranged provision, quartered by men in power, with a scandalous malversation, upon that national fund provided for the veterans and the heroes of literature. We have thus noticed Mr. Redding's personal claims because he represents, with conspicuous force, a large class of similar cases. We have done so entirely upon public grounds; in no eleemosynary spirit, but in simple assertion of the rights of literary men. We don't expect that the Ethiopian will change his skin; or that persons devoted to perhaps the most self-seeking, narrowing, and indurating of all pursuits, that of political pay and notoriety, will ever become very different from what they always have been; but here, in this honourable but most inadequate provision, set apart by the wealthiest empire the world has ever seen, as a recognition, such as it is, of that literature which has added so signally to its glory, the public, no less than the literary profession, have an obvious interest. Both have a right to be satisfied that the trust is honestly administered; and we gladly seize this opportunity of contributing, however humbly, to direct the attention of the public to an inveterate and cruel abuse.

DUAN NA CLAEV—THE LEGEND OF THE GLAIVE.

(BY HYACINTH CON CAROLAN.)

GAESA—THE EXPLOIT IMPOSED.

FAIR-SHOULDER, Fionula fair,
The wondrous child of Lir's old race,
Answered the hero of the raven hair,
Of the strong hand and princely grace,
The great Cathair.

"Five leagues from hence doth the Norseman lie,
Beneath his cromlech gray;
For three miles round no soul draws nigh
From eve till dawn of day.
Nor human friend, nor horse, nor hound,
Nought that hath life must cross that ground;
And in the cromlech side by side,
The dead man and his sword abide.
And if you love me as you sware,
And for my love will greatly dare,
Alone to-night you'll seize, and bring
To me the glaive of the great sea-king.
And so, for aye, his fame and thine,
And, with your fame, more humbly mine,
Like three harps sounding in the hall
To the same story
Of poetic glory,
Shall ring for ever in the ears of all."

Oh! who'd have dreamed beneath the grace
Of that rich and wondrous form and face,
Between those red angelic lips,
And the small teeth with pearly tips,
In the midnight blue of her dewy eye
As she dropt her gaze with a blush and sigh,
Could lie
Such cruelty.
Or who could deem
That beauty's talisman should gleam
A spell to blast him, not to bless,
From the white brow of the sorceress.

THE HERO DEVOTES HIMSELF.

Her little sandalled foot before
Flushed with the wildering light of beauty.
He kneeled and swore—
"Lady, this moment overpays,
The long eclipse of future days—
My joy to dare, to die my duty,
If only from my endless night,
One lingering star ascends of light
Worthy of thy auroral crown,
And of true love's forlorn renown.
The story of my adoration,
Like a jewel from the sea
Where I am lost, returned shall be,
A relic and a decoration;
And harpers mingle, when they sing thy name,
My requiem with thy living beauty's fame."

And with those words Cathair is gone,
And Fionula is alone.
The hero's hair blew back and showed
His gleaming eyes and forehead broad;
With marble face, and downcast head,
And, in resolve, already dead,
On to the altar and the knife,
Like one that hath forsaken life,
And nears the sacrificial goal
And carries in his hand his soul.

And on he paces, mute, alone,
By moss-grown cairn, and druid stone,
Broad fields of corn, and sloping meadow,
And level light, and lengthening shadow,
By purpling hills and yellow woods,
And blazonry of western clouds
That o'er pale green and amber sky,
Weltering in gold and crimson, lie.
  Bathed in the evening's spirit tender,
A brown bird sitting on a spray,
Whistles its happy soul away,
  And thrills with life the silent splendour.
The glorious moment wanes and dies,
And night rides up the eastern skies,
Line behind line, and hand in hand,
In sable cloaked, the aerial band,
From pole to pole ascending far,
In every helm a blinking star;
And their voiceless march before,
Like dust, the white mist rises hoar.
So darkness, and the dew and hush
Of night, came down on slope and bush,
And every glen and blue ravine
  Was filmed with smoky haze,
And autumn's glow and russet green
  Grew blurred and waste before his gaze;
And beetling mountain, stark and high,
And fringe of hedgerow 'gainst the sky,
And wild flowers 'neath his foot that lay,
Together melted into gray,
And are in starry darkness lost,
As 'mong the Lisses three he crossed.
He feels that unseen shapes are near,
And tittered words are in his ear,
    Now here and now there,
  Faint harping and singing
  And fairy spurs ringing,
And the whirr of their coursers shrill tremble in air.
And hovering glee and hovering pain
Are in his ear and on his brain
  Their dreadful fancies shedding,
As swiftly o'er the throbbing sward,
  Through haunted vapours treading,
Looms black before his tranced regard
Morrua's forest, nobly wild,
Afar in billowy verdure piled.

THE SONG OF THE SPIRITS.

Far behind him moved blackness and flickering glimmer.
For an hour to the northward the tempest was rising,
Slow mounting and lurid—and earth lay expecting,
Voiceless and breathless, the yell of the tyrant.

So he entered the tall, vacant halls of the forest:
No bird in its branches, no antler beneath them,
Nor boom of the beetle, nor bay of the wild dog.
Like the Priestess of Mystery glides a white shadow,
On her lip her forefinger—he saw not, but followed.
He knew that his fate led him on to the combat,
He knew that a mandate of silence lay on him.
The stems of the great trees, like time-furrowed castles,
Gray glimmered through darkness impassive and awful;
Broad at base and at battlement broader, the oak-trunks,
And a canopy dusky, snake-twisted, of branches,
Like crypts of cathedrals, low-groined and broad-pillared,
Stretched mazily this way and that in perspective.

As sweet the evening glories faded
O'er Fionula's bower,
A lone sad voice the maid upbraided,
Charming the twilight hour.
With parted lips and hand to ear
She listened to the melody
So wildly and so faintly clear,
At the open casement dreamily.
The lonely splendour of a star
Lay trembling in her virgin tear;
And with the music, nigh or far,
There fell upon her heart a fear;
And round her ivory throat she drew
The cloak that doth in crimson fold her;
And round her shoulder, veined with blue,
And polished as a statue's shoulder;
The lady brooched her crimson-cloak,
Still through the casement wildly gazing,
Like one whom spirit-songs awoke
From earthly sleep to sights amazing.
The Princess to the postern hied,
Upon her throat the jewels spark;
Her hand her pearly ear beside,
And gleam her large eyes into dark.
"From close of flower till song of lark,
By mist or moonshine, hill and hollow—
To follow still, and still to hark—
To hearken still, and still to follow."
Strange music of an ecstacy—
'Twas hardly sound, and came unsought;
She smiled, and listened to the lay
As listening to a sad sweet thought.
Glares in the west a stain of blood,
The Wizard North its black storm raises—
And eastward o'er Morrua's wood,
A lone pale star revengeful gazes.
Sitting, spinning in the hall
With lamps alight, the sunset after,
The whirring task her maids speed all
With silvery songs and girlish laughter.
And, like an apparition, she
Is lost—and lost—and lost for ever,
And more their loving eyes shall see
The splendrous Fionula—never.
Lost; but her love she'll never find—
Sooner the foam-bell in its wake,
O'er ocean's waste, in ocean's wind,
The flying ship will overtake.

Through the wood of Morrua and over its root-knotted flooring
The hero speeds onward, alone, on his terrible message;
When faint and far off, like the thick-coming gallop of battle,
The pulse of the hurricane, hollow, spreads trembling before it.
There's a gasp and a silence around him—a swooning of nature,
And the forest trees moan, and complain with a presage of evil.
And nearer, like great organs wailing, high-fifing through thunder,
And crashing, and deafening, and yelling in clangorous uproar,
Soaring onward, down-riding, and tearing the wreck of its conquest,
The tempest swoops on: all the branches before it bend, singing
Like cordage in shipwreck; before it sear leaves fly like vapour;
Before it bowed down the wide armies, plumed heads of the forest,
In dark frenzy rolling, up-tossing their scathed arms like monads.
Dizzy lightnings split this way and that in the blind void above him;
For a moment long passages reeling and wild with the tempest,
In the blue snap and dazzle of lightning, throb vivid and vanish;
And white glare the wrinkles and knots of the oak-trees beside him,
While close overhead yell the clangour and stun of the thunder.

And southward drift the din and glare,
Like navies battling in the air;
On boom the thunder and the wind,
And wreck and silence lie behind,
While whirlwind roared and lightning burned,
The hero neither paused nor turned.
Mid the wild wail of shrilly boughs,
And pealing thunder's claps and soughs;
And by the lightning's livid tapers,
And the black pall of eddying vapours,
  He followed the white shadow's call,
That never swerved for flash or wind,
And never stops nor looks behind,
  But leads him to his funeral.

The forest opens as he goes,
And scattered trees in groups and rows
  Beneath the clear sky soon
Stand in the mists of midnight drooping,
By moss-grown rocks fantastic stooping,
  In the blue shadows of the yellow moon.

THE CROMLECH.

And in the moonlight, bleached as bones,
Uprose the monumental stones,
And met the hero suddenly
    With a blind stare
    Dull as despair.
The formless stone that blocks the door
Like a robed monster broad and hoar,
  He twice essayed to earth to throw
With quivering sinew, bursting vein,
  With grinding teeth and scowling brow;
From his dark forehead with the strain,
Beads start and drop like thunder-rain;
And in the breathless tug and reek,
All his lithe body seems to creak.
  The mighty stone to earth is hurled.
Black gapes the violated door,
Through which he goes—to come no more—
  No more to find this fair, sad world.

THORGIL AND HIS GLAIVE.

Where high the vaults of midnight gape
In the black waste, a blacker shape—
The nearer 'gainst the distant dark,
He could the giant Norseman mark:
Beneath a brazen stormy sky,
That never moves but dead doth lie—
A black tarn's waters sitting by;
And on the rock could darkly see
The mighty glaive beside his knee.
The hero's front and upreared form
Loom dim as headlands in a storm.
No more will flicker passion's meteors
O'er the dead shadows of his features,
Fixed in the apathy eternal
That lulls him in repose infernal.
The cornice of his knotted brows
A direful shadow downward throws
Upon his eye-balls dull and stark,
Like white stones glimmering in the dark;
And, carved in their forlorn despair,
His glooming features changeless wear
Gigantic sorrow and disdain,
The iron sneer of endless pain.
From the lips of the awful phantom woke
A voice, and thus, by the tarn, it spoke—

"*Son of Malmorra, what canst thou gather here?*"

The spell was broke that held him dumb,
And held his soul aghast and numb,
With a wild throb,
A laugh, and sob,
The frenzied courage came again
Of Cathair, prince of men.
With planted foot, with arm extended,
And his ferine gaze distended,
Back flowed the cataract of his hair
From the gleaming face of the great Cathair;
And he shouted, lion-voiced,
Like one defying who rejoiced:—
"Thorgil, king of the wintry sea—
Of the nine-gapped sword and minstrel glee—
Of mountains dark and craggy valleys—
Of the golden cup and hundred galleys—
Malmorra's son, myself, have sworn
To take thy sword, or ne'er return!"
The Norseman's phantom, black and dread,
Turned not, lifted not his head.
Mute, without anger or alarm,
As shadow stretches, stretched his arm;
Upon the hilt his hand he laid,
The metal dull one bell-note made—
One cold flash from the awakened blade
Flecked the waste sky with flying glare,
Like northern lights
That sport o' nights,
Shuddering across the empty air.
High overhead, where died the light
Through the wide caverns of the night,
The imprisoned echoes whispering first
Afar in moaning thunders burst.

Mortal armour nought avails—
Mortal weapon nought prevails.
Sheering the air, the enchanted blade
Of Thorgil a strange music made;
The brazen concave of the sky
Returns its shrilly sigh;
Above—around—along—
With the roaring shiver of a gong.
Black night around him floating, and a booming of the sea,
Have borne away the hero on the spirit-mælstrom free;
The shadows round him deepen in his soft and dreamless flight—
The pause of a new birth,
A forgetting of the earth,
Its action and its thinking,
A mighty whirl and sinking,
A subsidence into Lethe, and the ocean-caves of night.

TIR NAN OGE—THE LAND OF THE YOUNG.

A silvery song is in his ears—
A melody all sad and lone—
The voice that Fionula hears,
And follows still by brake and stone.
It is the voice of early years,
The early love long dead and gone.
His wounded head is on her knee,
Her hand his sable locks among;
And still the song enchantingly
By that remembered voice is sung.
And dreamily he opes his eyes:
Beneath in rosy lustre lies,
With many a shivered line of gold,
A misty lake in many a fold
Of wood, and slope, and rock, and hill,
And riven peak, and winding rill.
Long golden reeds and floating lilies tell
Their secrets and rejoicings to the breeze,
And every flowery star and tiny bell
That glow like oriel shadows 'neath the trees,
In gules and azure mottling the soft sward,
In fragrance and dim music sigh,
And sleep, and wake, but never die.
Such is the blessed mystery
That doth their loving weakness guard.
Here memory doth the hour beguile
And never too much pains or cheers,
Here all things sad are with a smile,
And all rejoicing is with tears.
Through everything there thrills a gladness,
Through everything there throbs a sadness;
And memory, love, and gratitude
A glory shed on every mood.

FIONULA.

HOW TO THIS HOUR SHE IS SOMETIMES SEEN BY NIGHT IN MUNSTER.

By the foot of old Keeper, beside the bohreen,
In the deep blue of night the thatched cabin is seen;
'Neath the furze-covered ledge, by the wild mountain brook,
Where the birch and the ash dimly shelter the nook,
And many's the clear star that trembles on high
O'er the thatch and the wild ash that melt in the sky.

"Shamus Oge" and old Teig are come home from the fair,
And the car stands up black with its shafts in the air,
A warbling of laughter hums over the floor,
And fragrant's the flush of the turf through the door.
Round the glow, the old folk, and the colleens, and boys,
Wile the hour with their stories, jokes, laughter, and noise;
Dogs stretched on the hearth with their chins on their feet lie,
To her own purring music the cat dozes sweetly;
Pretty smiles answer, coyly, while soft spins the wheel,
The glances of lovers or whispered appeal.

Stealing in, like the white cat, beneath the low thatch,
A hand, through the dark, softly lights on the hatch,
An oval face peeps through the clear deep of night,
From her jewels faint tremble blue splinters of light.
There's a stranger among us, a chill in the air,
An awful face peeping serene over there;
The green light of horror glares cold from each eye,
And the laughter flies shivering into a cry.
A flush from the fire hovers soft to the door,
In the dull void the pale lady glimmers no more.
The cow'ring dogs howl, slowly growls the white cat,
And the whisper out-shivers—"God bless us! what's that?"

The sweet summer moon over Aherloe dreams,
And the Galtees, gigantic, loom cold in her beams;
From the wide flood of purple the pale peaks uprise,
Slowly gliding like sails 'gainst the stars of the skies;
Soft moonlight is drifted on mountain and wood,
Airy voices sing faint to the drone of the flood,
As the traveller benighted hies onward in fear,
And the clink of his footstep falls shrill on his ear.
There's a hush in the bushes, a chill in the air,
And a breath steals beside him, and whispers, "Beware!"
While aslant by the oak, down the hollow ravine,
Like a flying bird's shadow, smooth-gliding, is seen
Fionula the Cruel, the brightest, the worst,
With a terrible beauty the vision accurst,
Gold-filleted, sandalled, of times dead and gone—
Far-looking, and harking, pursuing, goes on;
Her white hand by her ear flickers through her black hair,
From the lamp of her eye floats the sheen of despair;
Her cold lips apart, and her teeth in her smile
Glimmer death on her face with a horrible wile.
Three throbs at his heart—not a breath at his lip,
As the figure skims by like the swoop of a ship;
The breeze dies and drops like a bird on the wing,
And the pulse of the rivulet ceases to ring;
The stars and the moon dilate o'er his head,
And smile out an icy salute to the dead.

The traveller—alone—signs the cross on his breast,
Gasps a prayer to the saints for her weary soul's rest;
His "gospel" close pressed to the beat of his heart,
And fears to remain there, yet dreads to depart.
By the village fire cowering, recounts it that night,
While the round of his list'ners close, pale in affright;
And at wakes tells the neighbours—God bless us!—again
How he met Fionula in Aherloe Glen.

ABHRAIN AN BHUIDEIL.

THE SONG OF THE BOTTLE OF WHISKY.

BY HYACINTH CON CAROLAN.

From what dripping cell, through what fairy glen,
Where 'mid old rocks and ivy the fox makes his den ;
Over what lonesome mountain,
Acuishla machree !
Where gauger ne'er trod,
Sweet as the flowery sod,
Wild as the breath
Of the breeze on the heath,
And sparkling all o'er like a moon-lighted fountain,
Are you come to me—
Sorrowful me ?

Dancing—inspiring—
My wild blood firing ;
Oh ! terrible glory—
Oh ! beautiful Siren—
Come, tell the old story—
Come, light up my fancy, and open my heart.

Oh! beautiful ruin—
My life—my undoing,
Soft and fierce as a pantheress,
Dream of my longing, and wreck of my soul,
I never knew love till I loved *you*—enchantress!

At first, when I knew you, 'twas only flirtation—
The touch of a lip, and the flash of an eye;
But 'tis different now—desperation!
I worship before you—
I curse and adore you,
And without you I'd die.

Wirristhru!
I wish 'twas again
The happy time when
I cared little about you,
Could do well without you,
Just to laugh and to view you;
'Tis little I knew you!

Oh! terrible darling,
How have you sought me,
Enchanted, and caught me?
See, now, where you've brought me—
To sleep by the road-side, and dress me in rags.
Think how you found me;
Dreams come around me—
The dew of my childhood, and life's morning beam;
Now I sleep by the road-side, covered with rags.
My heart that sang merrily when I was young,
Swells up like a billow, and bursts in despair;
And the wreck of my hopes on bleak memory flung,
And cries on the air,
Are all that is left of the dream.

Wirristhru!
My father and mother,
The priest, and my brother—
Not one has a good word for you.
But I can't part you, darling, their preaching's all vain;
You'll burn in my heart till these thin pulses stop;
And the wild cup of life in your fragrance I'll drain
To the last brilliant drop.
Then oblivion will cover
The shame that is over,
The brain that was mad, and the heart that was sore;
Then, beautiful witch!
I'll be found—in a ditch,
With your kiss on my cold lips, and never rise more.

MODERN NOVEL AND ROMANCE.

ROMANCE! Ah, pleasant word, so full of fascination for us all. It is an old world, this of ours; but it is a romantic world, even at its present advanced age. Upon this very day, dedicate to Saint Valentine, the Berkshire wolds and woodlands among which this is written are astir with poetic life. High up in ether—invisible amid the intense blue—a whole choir of joyous larks are carolling in ecstasy; the ploughmen are hard at work, and the fresh odour of upturned earth, a wholesome fragrance which your perfumers cannot mimic, greets the wayfarer's nostril at every step. Earth's poetry dies not, neither does the romance of human life. Some twenty miles across country we can see the mighty towers of Windsor: and at once imagination flies to the far north, whence comes a pretty young princess to wed the heir of England. Why, here is a romance, and a royal romance, too. From the fierce little kingdom, which startled us from our proprieties some centuries back, giving us as rulers "Knut the King," and other kings less famous, we are now to have a queen. There is a romance in this which even Earl Russell's prosaic interference cannot spoil.

But the royal honeymoon will be over ere this reaches our readers. Draw down the green blinds, O pretty handmaiden of ours, and shut out the enticing view of Windsor Castle, and the sunshine falling on the level lawn. Here be a vast heap of new books awaiting criticism, the romance of the age in one or two or three volumes, but especially three. Now must we be analytical and philosophical, which, on a fine spring day, is perfectly abominable. Why was the art of printing invented? Surely never did any invention bring so much torture to the human race.

Three kinds of novels are just now

in fashion: the enigma novel, the class novel, the sensation novel. The great living master of the enigma novel is Mr. Wilkie Collins. He is unrivalled at a charade in three volumes. In "No Name," as in the "Woman in White," he has puzzled the public admirably. Yet, after all, he is a poor imitator of Edgar Poe. There is more originality in any one of Poe's short tales—"The Purloined Letter," for example—than in Mr. Collins's most complicated construction. Both writers put a tale together as a skilful lockmaker does a difficult lock; the various parts fit into each other with wonderful accuracy, and the keenest intellect cannot find a way through the difficulty. When reading a tale by Mr. Collins we are always reminded of the marvellous equation papers they used to set at St. John's College, Cambridge. Mr. Collins's inferiority to Poe results from the absence of the poetic faculty, which in the American writer was supreme and dominant. And in "No Name," Mr. Collins has certainly fallen below the position which he had previously achieved. The Count Fosco of his earlier novel was a very remarkable conception; nothing of the kind redeems "No Name." So singularly poor in character are Mr. Collins's writings that one feels surprise at his having imagined Count Fosco. That fat, subtle, good-humoured, conceited, cruel Italian is perfect in his way; we could wish our author to cogitate and observe for a year or two, with the faint hope that he might do something else as good.

Chief among the writers of the class novel is Mr. Anthony Trollope; his faculty is really amazing. He sketches easy-going bishops, energetic archdeacons, quiet precentors, well-to-do rectors, starved perpetual curates, as if he had held a sinecure rectory all his life, and had spent the whole time in studying his brethren. He photographs the clerical exterior accurately; he does not go below the surface; does not introduce us to the man beneath the surplice. But so far as external habits go, Mr. Trollope is unsurpassed as a clerical painter; and his success arises from his carefully noticing the weaknesses of those he desires to sketch. Every class has its weaknesses; reproduce these, and the world will exclaim—What a likeness! If you attempt to paint the strength of a man your task is more difficult, and the public are less likely to recognise your subject. Mr. Trollope knows the limits of his power, and paints weaknesses only. His last triumph, in "Orley Farm," has been in a very unclerical direction. From bishops and archdeacons he has gone to commercial travellers; and really he describes all the bagman's little weaknesses as if he had been a bagman himself from infancy. He saturates you with the atmosphere of the commercial room; he leaves upon your palate the flavour of that fiery port which the bagman loves. Only by the doctrine of metempsychosis can we explain Mr. Trollope's singular faculty. In one of his previous existences he must have taken holy, and in another unholy, orders.

Mrs. Oliphant, in "The Chronicles of Carlingford," originally published in *Blackwood*, shows herself a dangerous rival to Mr. Trollope. She has been among dissenting ministers and dissenting deacons, and brings them before the public with merciless truthfulness. Had she been educated at Homerton College, and "providentially called" to preach and hold tea-meetings at a hundred a-year, she could not more graphically depict the class to which she has devoted her attention. We confess that her sketches interest us more than Mr. Trollope's. He is unrivalled at a clergyman; but we know the clergy pretty well, and we also know that he paints only the surface. He is good at a commercial traveller; but commercial travellers are a vulgar and insignificant race, whose very existence matters little. But to the literary public dissenting ministers are comparatively unknown, while at the same time they are possessed of immense influence over large classes of the community. So we eagerly follow Mrs. Oliphant into the *terra incognita* of congregationalism, and watch her young hero from Homerton, bullied by deacons, made love to by deacons' daughters, and cured of his high ambition by the vulgar society which surrounds him. As a study of quite a new field of life commend us to "The Chronicles of Carlingford." If those chapters of it, which describe the strife between the hero's spiritual and intellectual tendencies and the vulgarities of his deacons and congregation, could be circulated in the form of a tract, they might be of some service to the sectaries of whom they treat. Never before have we seen the mere self-esteem and petty ambition which alone perpetuate dissent so thoroughly unveiled. Nonconformity, which was once a noble protest against real or assumed error, is now an ignoble protest of the uneducated against the supremacy of the educated, of the vulgar against the superiority of the refined. Mrs. Oliphant's novel develops this with masterly ability.

The sensation novel is a special development of the taste of the day. Nothing will stimulate the jaded appetites of the English populace, except what has been called a sensation. Crowds assemble to see Blondin on the high-rope, or Leotard flying from his perilous trapeze, or Olmar, a human spider, walking on a lofty ceiling, with head downwards, or Boucicault taking his famous "header." It is the very same tendency as that of Imperial Rome, whose eager populace rushed to see the gladiators kill one another, and the Christians struggle with the lions. To obtain a London audience for a good English comedy, "The Beaux' Stratagem," let us say, or "The School for Scandal," would be scarcely possible. True, they crowd to see Mr. Sothern in "Dundreary," but this is mere farce, and the taste for farce is closely allied with the taste for melodrama. Burlesques, full of abominable puns, alternate at our theatres with sensation dramas; debased comedy divides the throne with debased tragedy. We see the same in literature. Pure comedy in the novel becomes less and less popular. Mr. Trollope, in "Orley Farm," makes his heroine commit and conceal a forgery. Mrs. Oliphant, in "The Chronicles of Carlingford," gives us an abduction, an attempted murder, and a young lady frightened into catalepsy. Mrs. Henry Wood produced, perhaps, the most popular of the sensation novels, "East Lynne." There was something very ingenious in bringing back a man's first wife, supposed to be dead, to act as governess to her own children. Of course it was impossible, but what of that? Miss Braddon is now our most successful sensationist; and in "Lady Audley's Secret," and "Aurora Floyd," she has rested the whole interest of her story on a concealed bigamy. The fair fiend of the former story is rather too unpleasant a heroine; but we cannot help sympathizing with the beautiful and stately Aurora, wedded to a handsome scoundrel of a groom, and concealing her marriage from honest John Mellish. Miss Braddon is certainly very skilful in what used to be called "piling up the agony," and, even after the secret is out, and the groom murdered, continues to keep her readers in suspense as to whether Aurora will be hanged. She is also remarkably *au fait* in the habits of "horsy" men and "fast" young ladies. Conyers is drawn to the life; while Aurora herself, with her capital judgment of horses, and preternatural knowledge of the arcana of the racing-stables, is a perfect picture of Di Vernon's latest development. Yet, after all, bigamy is not a satisfactory subject for literary treatment.

In "A Daughter of Eve," Mr. Hain Friswell, who is favourably known as a producer of light literature, introduces, by way of arousing a sensation, a young lady, whom he euphemistically styles "a soiled dove." It is impossible to regard modern society without acknowledging the abundant existence of such persons. Lucretia has indeed been lectured lately for her useless imitation of Thaïs. "Lucretia may unveil her ankle. Thaïs blushes not if her garter be exposed. Think you Lord Tom Noddy will marry Lucretia if she shows him her garter?" Probably not; and the fast young ladies of the day really require to be taught that on her own ground they are no match for Thaïs. It would be easy to write an essay on this special aspect of modern society. When men grow wealthier and more luxurious, when the expenses of a wife and family become alarming, there will be plenty of illicit connexions. The complex civilization of England is rapidly reaching the point invariably attained by previous civilizations; three marked symptoms of moral and intellectual decadence at this moment are obvious. One is the popularity of scepticism; disbelief is quite the fashion, infecting bishops and sage divines. The second is that taste for the cruel and perilous in public entertainments, to which we have already referred, and which shows that the people cannot do without morbid excitement. And the third is that insolent disregard of decency with which men enter into illicit connexions; men, too, who fill prominent positions, and profess a belief in the Christian religion. It is an unsatisfactory sign of the time when the photograph of an impudent courtezan is to be found among those of statesmen and bishops, and sells better than any of them; when such persons are visible in all places of fashionable resort; when modest young ladies do not blush to ask questions about them; when they are advertised by leading letter-writers in the *Times;* when a novelist in search of a sensation finds what he needs in this direction. Our fathers tolerated a literature more outspoken than ours, and are presumed to have been grosser in their social converse; but we are not sure that society was less pure when euphemisms about "pretty horse-breakers" and "soiled doves," were quite unknown, when Anonyma would have been driven in disgrace from the Parks, and when neither the daily papers nor one's pretty cousin would have acknowledged her existence.

Mr. Friswell introduces his readers to a lady of this class, whom he calls Pauline. A very pleasant little interior he sketches for her; and we first find her eating a partridge for supper, and drinking claret therewith. That the author intends to be very moral *va sans dire.* Far be it from us to accuse him of bringing in the pretty Pauline with any intent except that of being didactic. But admitting this, is it well for your average novelist to teach so delicate a topic? We think not. We want a stronger hand for it. We can remember how Robert Browning treated it in "Pippa Passes," and do not care to see any meaner pen employed upon so grave a theme. For the theme is terribly grave. The man who knows anything of London life, who has seen youth and beauty wasted and defiled to satiate the lusts of his fellows, who has for a moment reflected on the vast amount of misery caused by the foul desires of this one great city, cannot underestimate the gravity of the theme. And, unless he who treated it had the iron keenness of Juvenal, or the tragic power of Dante, it were better left alone. Alas, for the ignorant young creatures who expiate by a short career of mingled gaiety and anguish, the gaiety more bitter than the anguish, a moment of voluptuous delight! Alas for the true hearts broken by those girlish sinners, for the shame and sorrow which many a thoughtless child of seventeen has inflicted upon all who loved her! Stand in the heart of western London at midnight, and try to realize the mass of misery implied in the busy scene before you. Yet the lust of the great city must be fed; ay, and it *is* fed, day after day. This is no theme for an amusing novel; it is a topic for a stern and earnest thinker, if such would but come to grapple with it.

Superstition is a good basis for sensation, and contemporary society is singularly superstitious. This, again, is a mark of that over-civilization which we seem to have attained; it is indeed the invariable accompaniment of partial or entire infidelity. He who realizes the presence of God in the world, and the movement of God's infinite power in the very least event that happens, has no room in his imagination for spectres and phantoms. But, as the weakness of central life in any creature results in parasitical life, so the weakness of faith in the unseen mysteries which are true, makes men credulous of absurdities and falsehoods. Introduction to the spirit-world is now a professional matter. "Spiritualism" has its literature and its art, its monthly magazine and its photographers, who will supply you with a likeness of your deceased grandmother. If the old lady, whom you recollect silver-haired and stone-blind, comes out upon the iodized paper, chestnut-tressed and radiant-eyed, the operator will naturally say that her youth has been renewed in the other world. If wise he will quote Mr. Frederick Locker's rhymes to his grandmother—

"Beneath a summer tree
As she sits, her reverie
Has a charm;
Her ringlets are in taste,--
What an arm! and what a waist
For an arm!"

Some of our readers may, perhaps, believe that spirits will come from the vasty deep to play accordions out of tune, swing dining-room tables about, and rap out inaccurate replies to useless questions. We do not; and we regret to see Mr. George Macdonald, a young writer of more than ordinary capacity, pandering to this fashionable folly in "David Elginbrod." This would have been a good novel but for its supernaturalism. Mr. Macdonald gives us the impression that he believes the possibility of the phenomena he narrates; that he believes, for example, that a man can exert such power over a woman as to cause her to fall into a trance at his will, and in that trance to obey him slavishly. This power is presumed to be exercised from a distance, and the patient is described as endued with a clairvoyance which enables her to indicate the precise place where her mesmerizer is. All this is sheer nonsense; and, if Mr. Macdonald introduced it simply for the sake of the sensation, we should be content to wish him happier invention, and better taste. But the man appears to believe his own absurdities; and as we have encountered a great number of persons, apparently sane on other points, who profess to believe in similar impossibilities, we are not so surprised as otherwise might be the case, at finding a tolerably intelligent writer the victim of a debasing superstition. For debasing it assuredly is, inasmuch as it leads to abject materialism, and sets up vulgar phantoms in rivalry with the Ruler of the Universe. "The Castle of Otranto" and "The Mysteries of Udolpho," are wholesome reading in comparison with "David Elginbrod."

Among recent novels, which it would be impossible to classify, "Barrington" holds a high rank. Pleasant it is to welcome the dashing Irish novelist again, and to see that he is in no degree less brilliant than in days of old. Indeed, Charles Lever, in this his latest work, shows that his powers are not only undiminished, but developed and matured. "The Fisherman's Home," the picturesque inn-cottage on the margin of the Nore, where the chief action of the story is wrought out, is described with almost poetic felicity. It is an idyl in prose. One longs to pass a week there, fishing the river, and daily dining with Peter Barrington, whose old wine and old stories would leave nothing to be desired. One longs to take tea with his courtly, yet kind-hearted sister, Dinah. One longs to encounter Polly Dill, that exquisite mixture of romance and common sense, of gay daring and unerring tact. For two characters only, this book of Lever's deserves long life. Never has there been a finer picture of a gallant old Irish gentleman, fearless and honourable, equally ready to fight a duel and to laugh at a dun, than this sketch of Peter Barrington. The old man is thoroughly lovable. He moves you to enthusiasm. If a character in a novel seems real—if you feel towards it as you do to a Hamlet or a Falstaff—no further proof is needed that the character in question is well drawn. And so it is with Peter Barrington. The reader finds it difficult to believe that there is not a "Fisherman's Home" somewhere by the margin of one of Ireland's beautiful rivers, where an octogenarian gentleman, ruined by litigation and profusion, chooses to keep an hostelry for anglers. We should feel no surprise to encounter Peter Barrington on our very next fishing excursion. And Polly Dill is equally real. She is an Irish girl of the truest type; rather wild, but thoroughly good. She will ride desperately for a wager; she will rattle away brilliantly in an aristocratic drawing-room; and she is equally ready to help her brother, who is incorrigibly dull, in his study of anatomy. A charming creature is Polly Dill, and nobody can wonder that Colonel Hunter falls passionately in love with her. She is the consummate flower of the Celtic blood; you meet no such creatures in these calmer English shires. There are pretty girls, who ride well to hounds; we saw a thorough beauty, only this day, well forward after her Majesty's staghounds across Maidenhead Thicket, riding a little brown mare. And there are quiet intellectual young ladies, who can play Beethoven to you, and quote *In Memoriam*, and explain Darwin's Theory. But the perfect mixture of moral, intellectual, and physical capacities which makes a girl irresistible, can only be found in Ireland. And nobody can depict it with Charles Lever's vigour and accuracy. "Barrington" is emphatically a *healthy* novel; and this, in days of morbid excitement and mental pathology, is no small praise. As we turn to it, after some that we have had to read, it is like encountering the fresh wind on the heath after a long inhalation of the dense city's pestilent breath.

There are some men who could write a good novel if they would, but they won't. The author of "Thalatta" is of these. He has thrown together a series of unconnected sketches, exquisite in style, from which we learn that he has a great love for the sea, and for Mr. Disraeli. It is a delight to be with him on the ocean, every one of whose moods and changes he depicts with poetic power. He is haunted by the spirit of the surge. Perhaps his finest effort is an account of a sudden squall, in which a young fisherman is lost. He is betrothed, this luckless son of the sea, and at the very moment of his departure has had a slight quarrel with the girl of his heart. Very calm is the weather, when he puts away from shore; yet a sad presentiment comes over the young creature who loves him. And that presentiment is realized. In the sudden gale the returning boats can scarcely make the harbour of the little fishing village; and she, wild with anxiety upon the beach, sees the white face and stern lips of her lover but for one moment as the mad wind and fierce current sweep him past the pier. Very powerfully is this episode given. Very full of beauty are the sketches of the sea and its mysteries. Very clever is the delineation of the hero—an idealized portrait of Mr. Disraeli. The author of "Thalatta" is manifestly an Edinburgh man; and he devotes some capital writing to Christopher North, "the light-haired and bright-eyed god who carried fire and sword into the camp of the Titans." Tory at heart, full of poetic insight, with a style of unusual beauty, the writer of "Thalatta" has great achievements within his power. Let him cultivate his constructive faculty, and he may, if so disposed, become a popular novelist. Of him, as of Charles Lever, we may say that he is a thoroughly healthy writer; there is no melodrama, no mesmerism, nothing morbid about him.

Of the "HOUSE BY THE CHURCHYARD," we are not to be supposed competent to speak—no man is, of his own child's deservings. We abandon it, therefore, to those able critics who are exempt from impeachment on this score, and who have pronounced upon it, uninfluenced themselves by parental instincts, to the entire satisfaction of ours.

The greatest literary nuisance of the present day is the professional novelist. Every man, says somebody or other, has at least *one book* in them. Well and good. We don't object to that one book; we believe that the first book of the dullest possible human being would be worth reading. But, unhappily for the reading public, and happily for Mr. Mudie, everybody who has written one book thinks he can write a second. Now, the first novel or romance is interesting, because it reflects the very heart and soul of its writer. He (or she) puts into it all the joy and all the bitterness, all the poetry and all the disappointment of his young life. The second book, in ninety-nine out of a hundred cases, is as dull as an auctioneer's catalogue. But, having once got hold of a complaisant publisher, your young gentleman or young lady (most frequently the latter) goes on writing. Consequently, we get novel after novel, which are mere variations of the first. Even Charlotte Bronte was guilty of this reproduction; there is scarcely anything in "Shirley and Villette," which there is not in "Jane Eyre." Inferior writers who, having made a slight sensation with their first books, develop into professional novelists, are the most wearisome of literary bores. Publishers, like other mere men of business, judge an article by the sale which similar articles from the same manufactory have had; and hence it follows, that we are deluged with novels of the most unreadable description. At this moment, our table is loaded with books of this sort, which nothing should induce us to read, and the names of which we certainly will not immortalize in these pages. Almost any man or woman has the power to write one readable story; the reflexion of the romance of his or her own life. But the power to produce novel after novel is rare and glorious; it is the power of the poet—of him who creates for us another world beside our own.

The "Iliad" and the "Odyssey," are epic poems, but they are also the finest models we have of what novel-writing should be. In this prosaic age—or rather, this age which it is the fashion to call prosaic—the novel is written in prose, with slight regard to style. Still, the novel in verse is not without readers: *teste*, Tennyson's "Princess," Alexander Smith's "Edwin of Deira," and that marvellous production, "Taunhaüser." There is, unquestionably, a tendency to make poetry do its ancient duty—that is, tell a story. This being so, the example of Homer may well be set before our writers of verse and of prose. He—for we deem Homer an individual entity, despite the absurdities of Wolff—had two stories to tell. One was the wrath of Achilleus; the other, the wanderings of Odysseus. Let him who has a story to tell study Homer's method; observe how straightforward is his narration, how stringent its close when there is no more to narrate. We never take up a new novel by a young lady—and, truth to say, we encounter more new novels by young ladies than is at all pleasant—without wishing that we could compel the charming creature in question to read the "Odyssey" in the original. But, if this would be too troublesome a business, let her, at least, study nature. Let her face the world's realities, and give us as much truth and as little impossibility as she can. Between her fictitious atmosphere of the world and the real atmosphere there is as much difference as between the breath of a hot-house and that of the wild east wind. We—and Charles Kingsley is on our side — prefer the east wind to the tepid exotic odour which fills the edifice of glass.

"Poets may sing of the blossoming May,
Faint with the odour of lily and thorn,
When greener the woods grow every day,
And the soft skies smile on a spring new born;
Poets may sing of the golden June,
With its passionate roses under the arch
Of a summer heaven in the sultry noon—
But mine be a carol for windy March.

"Windy March with its frolic gales,
Filling the woods with a musical roar,
While over the sea scud wet white sails,
And the foam breaks fast on the rough lee-shore.
Wild free wind, from the far south-west,
Come, freshen the lands which the summer shall parch,
Gladden our hearts with thy swift unrest—
Wake the world to the music of March."

MILDRINGTON THE BARRISTER.*

THERE is nothing either in precedent or in principle to prevent our greeting with a few words of perfectly honest, though on the whole, favourable criticism, the very remarkable novel now issued collectively in two volumes, and which in a different shape, in these pages, it was our fortune to introduce to the reading public.

"Mildrington the Barrister" is written in a spirit of cool and almost sardonic defiance of the sensation appetites of modern novel-readers. The story is studiously simple. The procession of its incidents unexceptionably probable. Not one of the persons of the drama violates a single Act of Parliament. Not one of them utters a sentence of heroics, or calls up so much as one melodramatic look;—there is not, from first to last, a hint of blasphemy or a suspicion of bloodshed, and yet the tale is alive with collision and passion, full of clever situations, and sustains, from first to last, a feverish interest, repeatedly rising to positive excitement, but always severely and even cynically real.

The author is not obliged to describe his persons. You become acquainted with them as you do with those of real life—by your own experiences and observation. All they say and do is flavoured with character. The dialogue is always easy and vigorous, and sparkling, too, when he chooses to place his clever people under the strain of exertion.

The style will strike the ear of the conventional novel-reader perhaps a little strangely—a carelessness, nevertheless, highly artistic—and a grotesqueness pregnant with force and colour, recall something of the spirit of Carlyle's expressive *gaucheries* and his Hogarthean mastery of the secrets of contrast. In the region of fiction this is a perfectly new style, and in the very peculiar school of romantic satire cultivated by our author, eminently forcible as well as amusing. His *obiter* sketches, which abound in these "pictured pages," are touched with the same apparently careless but really delicate and powerful pencil, which presents us to so many elaborate and vivid portraits in the regular process of the story. Here, for instance, is an eminent counsel, chambered in the vicinity of our Mr. Mildrington:—

> "Take it that we are a brazen dun or skulking detective, with eye to the keyhole, or a London Asmodeus, that can strip down walls and house fronts; or, indeed, dis-

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* "Mildrington the Barrister"—a Romance, in two vols. London: Saunders, Otley, and Co.

guised in any far-fetched masquerade, that will help us to a glimpse of his privacy.

"In that workshop of his, No. 18, Fuller's Buildings, which is the selecter, or Belgravian quarter of the Inn, where the legal fashionables have their pale or settlement, was Mildrington the Barrister wielding his pick and shovel.

"Sergeant Rebutter, the eminent common law practitioner, was his *vis à vis*, and the clang of his forge and anvil rang out musically from over the way: his style and legend bearding Mr. Mildrington's in conspicuous white letters. The Sergeant went round all day, and a good portion of the night too, in a private drudgery mill of his own: only his grinding was of a more vital and public nature, having to do with gentlemen of the jury and witnesses, and that unclean and doubtful miscellany which is filtered through the dock. And as the Sergeant took his grateful exercise, and went through his grand feat of grinding a thousand briefs in a thousand consecutive half-hours, a cloud of spirits, black-coated and gray, with whole pokes of the white linen bales upon their shoulders, flitted down from the various legal laundries, and looked on with admiration."

We don't *see* this gentleman—he merely illustrates the locality. We hear him—he is hinted into our acquaintance, like Washington Irving's immortal stout gentleman—and we are intensely and amusingly conscious of his immediate neighbourhood. But by way of sequel, and contrast to this characteristic phantom, we beg leave to announce Mr. Churstone Boleyn, who enters in all the glow and solidity of flesh and blood.

"Churstone Boleyn, Esq., M.P., was come to town from Churstone, the family seat. His name was to be found in the column of elegant arrivals at Starridge's. The journal of *pur sang* added, indeed, magnificently, 'and suite;' but this retinue resolved itself into the familiar valet, or *garde de corps*.

"A pale pink country gentleman, Boleyn of Churstone, M.P. Not raw and staring, and of an agricultural sirloin red, with an over saturation of the fats and the juices, and the richer oils, induced by devotion to the ox, and the labours of the ox; but a ripe softened pink, as though the sun's rays had fallen there, directed through the mellow medium of decanters of tawny port and '48 claret. Not short and stout, but tall, and inclined to a gentle portliness. A soft, mellifluous utterance, which came forth thickened by an implied undercurrent of fine old timber, sir; demesne land, sir; neighbour, Lord Hartletop; balance at Hoare's, sir; and stake in the county, sir. A clean man, with bright shining linen that reflected the spectator, and an eternal white waistcoat—copious, and yet glorious. These elders, respectful of their persons, deserve the reverence, and in a certain degree, the gratitude of society. Youth, and even a plated youth, it inhales most sweetly, and it turns with a just repugnance from the polite squalor and licensed neglect of advancing old age."

We have much of the minuteness, the exquisite finish, the literality and power of Dutch painting; the same raciness and character, and the same elaborate and amusing detail, and clever attention to "still life," applied to English subjects. Let us see how divertingly he can paint the properties and human furniture of a dinner-party.

"The grand banqueting-room at Starridge's had been swept and garnished for the festival. There was a buffet of silver and crystal on the sideboard. The table stretched away like a long cathedral window, glistening with the diaper sheen and subdued religious light of pale yellow and ruby hock glasses. A field of fresh, dainty, creamy napery. Boadly Gonne, who says a neat thing now and again, which has a good circulation, said he liked seeing 'even tables with their clean shirts on.' A *coup d'œil* of frosted silver, pink flowers, cool, icy-looking jugs; its ill-assorted company of glasses, personifying the seven ages or seven wines of man; and long lines of grimly-shaped volutes, our napkin-nests or pockets, wherein rolls repose so snugly, like new-laid eggs. I wonder if a Feejee gentleman, who has moved in the best society of his country, were suddenly introduced to this preparation, and were bidden to divine what its purpose was, what answer would the Feejee gentleman give us.

"Company glide up the lane between the file of chairs and the table. A little hesitation as to which they will elect, is allowable to the paired. Gently do ministering elves from behind propel the chairs inwardly. An instant's pause for the decent fiction of an unspoken grace, and the war-feast has begun."

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"Now the shapes of tottering gold jellies, of Magenta-coloured creams, the well-iced puddings, very soothing and grateful, have been swept away. The land is flowing with claret—it flows from the wide-lipped jugs. Fingers play absently with the dried fruits and French crystallizations. Man is brimming with philanthropy towards his fellow-man (and woman)—feels a gentle glow under his waistcoat—a grateful sense of repletion. He gazes on his thin cup-shaped glass with swimming eyes and a moist tenderness, as the decent menial fills it from behind with a gush. After all life is not so bad. There is a good deal of worth in the world."

We follow Mr. Mildrington into Her Majesty's Theatre, where we hear the "Traviata."

"The sorrows and sufferings of the naughty lady in ill-health roused the tenderest sympathies. The veil was lifted, and, for the first time, we find ourselves wandering, with an eager curiosity, over the pleasant pastures of the demi-monde, 'half world.' We shiver at the short hacking cough, and Sir Harvey Parkes, reeking from his hospitals, protests that the whole thing is exact in all pulmonary details. People relish without satiety the gasps, the spasms, the sudden paleness, the hectic flushes, the catchings of the chest, the sinkings, the risings, the fallings, the ghastly smiles, and the hundred other incidents of pronounced consumption. A little sin, in a pathological point of view, is a new idea. An agreeable combination of frailty of manners, along with frailty of lungs, had in it something piquant.

"The whole world began to feel that the 'half world' has been, in a manner, cruelly misunderstood. Reparation is due to the offended shade of Mrs. Haller—in decent horror of which amiable and repentant woman our ladies had too long been passing over to the other side of the street. Here was 'The Lost Sheep,' set to music, straying from the original sheep-walk (at best a very humdrum domain) to the most fascinating melodies. As the camelia had been consecrated for public veneration, so here was now a choice hot-house fruit set up for joint sympathy and homage, and a lost Pleiad restored to the firmament under the figure of the 'Damaged Peach.'"

Very entertaining are his pictures of ladies' battles. He has studied carefully "the Art of War" feminine, and knows by heart the whole gamut of that delicate and stinging style of combat. In the dialect of Carlyle it is Asmodeus who speaks; and in every sentence is the ring of a light and satiric devilry, while he recounts this little passage-of-arms in which one of his two Sirens pierces a turbaned Turk of her own sex, with the prettiest of diamond bodkins:—

"Mrs. Wander Wynne, the Honourable Mrs. Clayton Ringtail, Lady Mantower, Lady Mary Grayplover, with other noble dames, are sitting in secret Vehmgericht, while their chiefs carouse below. Their robes blossomed out luxuriously in monster flowers of rich glacé and moiré Victoria Regias. Among them was Miss Boleyn: but not of them. To her, they debated with closed doors. They had seen her, while the courses shifted, jousting with the men; they had seen those temporary mates, whom the laws of dinner wedlock had joined to them, giving way to a certain distraction; peeping round the corner of an intrusive epergne to get a view; in fact, turning unfaithful. These are the unpardonable sins. She destroyed the peace of dining wedded life. Her deep full eyes were loadstars, and her tongue's sweet air drew all things to her. Deep eyes, indeed! 'Boopis!' said a Homeric gentleman to his neighbour. Alas, I say again these are the unpardonable sins! for which vengeance is taken in another state. That state is the drawing-room.

"She always knew what the matrons—gentle souls—plotted for her. They would scalp her if they could decently—those gentle squaws. Their eyes lighted up fiercely with the joy of anticipation. They would sacrifice her on the altar of the ottoman, while the chiefs drank below. Every hand was against her. She had no friend among the women. She would be at their mercy for three-quarters of an hour; yet, mark how she fared.

"Position is half of the battle; so she would march straight into the very heart of them, and seat herself, not meanly on the outskirts, where the gates might come at last to be politely shut in her face; but, boldly, on the royal tabourets, actually cheek by jowl with great Lady Mantower. That potentate would be much discomposed at this profane contiguity. But there she was, a courageous intruder, in the centre of the female satraps. The advantage of position is immeasurable. Still she can be overlooked, politely; unseen, politely; unheard, politely. These are sure and deadly weapons; yet, mark our skilful Miss Boleyn. On the first hint of this game she has sprung back, and is *en garde*. Poor, unthinking Lady Mantower *would* overlook her. There had been some awkward dealings at a foreign watering-place, between the lovely Alice Mantower (ætatis, said the grossly malicious, eight-and-thirty, or in the hazy mists of that period), and young Paget Parker, a wealthy minor. Resulted then an ugly *esclandre*, and hurried interference of guardians; but as yet the transaction was buried at the opening of the Black Forest. It had not yet travelled to Frankfort. But she brought it all on her own old head. Says Miss Boleyn, calmly, 'When do you go abroad again, Lady Mantower. You were at Baden this year?' Lady Mantower smiles off direct answer, and has a question for Lady Mary Grayplover; yet has a sense of trouble and uneasy foreboding at her ancient heart. 'Or was it Homburg,' the cold quiet voice goes on; 'yes, it was Homburg; my cousin was there at the same time.' *Grace, je me rends*, is in the veteran's eyes; the old soldado of the drawing-room knows that she is in her enemy's power, and kneels for mercy. These of the Old Guard can find a victory even in defeat. Miss Boleyn was generous. How the veteran then chatted to her, and smeared her with the balsamic lubricant of flattery!"

His painting of female character is, indeed, particularly felicitous, cruel, and amusing. The fiendish, the merely human, and all their intermediate expressions, supply the special studies of his terrible sketch-book; and he has shown in its closing pages, but with a tantalizing brevity, a nearly equal mastery over the angelic.

The hero is a type of a pushing, selfish, energetic, clever, and very conceited young barrister, with excellent professional aptitudes, and abundance of the egotism and intrepidity which contribute so powerfully to success. He is the only son of his mother, and she is a widow—a widow, however, neither of the plaintive nor the designing school—too stern for the one, and too old for the other—with two master-passions—a love of rule, and an intense attachment to her son. Her assumed prerogative is supported not only by her obdurate and impetuous will, but more formidably by an absolute command over the estates to which the young man can only succeed by her act and deed. His fortunes are in her hands, and he has not yet made a footing at his profession firm enough to enable him to stand quite securely without her. The consequence of all this is that the conceited and self-willed Mr. Mildrington stands very much in awe of his mother. Notwithstanding which he marries—of course, without her knowing anything of it, for she has dreamed high dreams, and formed great matrimonial schemes for her son—a penniless and very pretty little French girl, of good extraction, but neither very brilliant nor very wise. Upon this clandestine *mêsalliance* depend the interest and all the best situations of the story. We shall not follow the plot, or disclose the catastrophe—an injustice too often inflicted by the reviewer upon the novelist. It is enough to say that the book is one of the very cleverest which the season has produced. Life, we all know, is a comedy to those who think, and there is plenty of thought and no lack of comedy here. The writer has founded a new, sarcastic, but very pleasant school of fiction, and he who wishes to see life from a novel point of view, and in a spirit to which he is quite unaccustomed, cannot do better than seat himself beside this Mephistophelean, but always amusing spectator, who criticises, narrates, expounds, and philosophizes, in so gentlemanlike, brilliant, and semi-diabolic a fashion.

LISPINGS FROM LOW LATITUDES.*

This is very unlike the comic drawing-room books to which the public has been accustomed; it is written with very high ideas of the capabilities of its peculiar order of literature; and is one of the very few among them—indeed the only one we can call to mind—which has a fair claim to rank as a *novelette.* It is racy of a satire sharp, sparkling, and withal genial as champaign; full of well-defined and delicately-sketched character, relieved and developed by cleverly contrived contrast and situation; it is sportive, but thoughtful, and gives earnest of that special dramatic talent, which has just made its brilliant *début* at the Haymarket. Lord Dufferin, the editor, has contributed a few notes in his own pleasant vein; and altogether, quite apart from its capital illustrations, it is about the most charming piece of narrative-comedy we have anywhere met with.

Written to cheer the supposed convalescence of a cherished friend, and at his laughing entreaty given to the publisher, its appearance was arrested by the sudden and fatal disappointment of the hopes under whose pleasant influence it was composed, and with the kind compliance of Mr. Murray, postponed for some months.

Lady Gifford's book is not only absolutely excellent in its kind, but has everywhere indications of still greater strength in reserve.

The situations are often highly grotesque; but the spirit of genuine comedy is never violated. The heroine—a very peculiar conception—sentimental to the verge of silliness, yet by no means wanting in mental activity and enterprise, with refined tastes and boundless credulity, and a pleasant vein of self-complacency; gentle, dreamy, and overflowing with kindness and veneration, the very soul of honour, is at once, the most absurd and the most amiable of human beings. The perpetually recurring contrast of highly ludicrous adventure and situation, with a dialogue and characters never once approaching farce or burlesque, and this heroine, for whom we never lose our respect and our liking, even while exploding with laughter over her delusions and misfortunes, give to this airy and vivid little romance, so full of clever painting and good-natured satire, its charming and peculiar Cervantean flavour. In this it stands alone. We have seen nothing quite like it in modern fiction. It is not imitative, but the spontaneous emanation of a bright and observant mind, which in its playfulness, its kindliness, and its mirthful and harmless satire, presents many points of feminine resemblance to that of the chronicler of the Manchegean knight's wanderings and exploits.

The tale is told in the diary of the heroine herself, and her character tints, dilates, or extinguishes, according to their nature, nearly every object presented to her. The narrative thus reflects with a very clever and unobtrusive elaborateness the amusing specialties of Miss Impulsia's mind and disposition.

We may remark, in passing, that Miss Gushington's notes furnish a really faithful and curious picture of the specialties and *désagrémens* of Egyptian travel.

The illustrations alone would make this one of the most amusing drawing-room books extant. From the pencil of an amateur, they are positively wonderful. What a world of character is in the heroine's long, thin, high nose; good-nature, refinement, and an enthusiastic silliness beam in every feature; but no matter where or how you find her, she is uniformly ladylike and even dignified. Admirable in contrast are the Scotch Mac Fishy family, each member of it a type of a distinct vulgarity. The grim, smirking, scheming Paterfamilias, who, "in a merry sport," pins poor Miss Gushington, under her hand and seal, to the forfeit she ultimately pays; his fat, good-humoured, tipsy wife, with her bonnet over her eye; their insufferable red-haired son, with his coarse conceit, pertness, brutality, and cunning; and the direful, hard-featured, pharisaical daughter, are presented with a brightness and decision of touch, and with a force and fun, quite delightful.

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* "Lispings from Low Latitudes." London: John Murray.

The kind of delusions to which the Hon. Impulsia Gushington is prone, will best be illustrated by a note from her diary, respecting one member of this interesting family :—

"I own that, in my present mood, the conventional elegancies of what is called the world's jargon, "good society," have lost much of their potent influence; worth, goodness, a certain spice of refreshing originality, combined with intellectual superiority, strength of will, and a dash of boldness, have a singular power to rivet the imagination, and fill the mind. These qualities combine to render Mr. Andrew Mac Fishy, junior, a very delightful companion; without much regularity of feature, or height of stature, his appearance is, nevertheless, singularly prepossessing. The nose is slightly *retroussé*, the eye, lively, and, as it were, conquering in expression; there is a general air of self-reliance and readiness to meet all emergencies in his appearance; the contour of the head is remarkably bold and resolute; the hair—of that bright energetic hue called 'Hiland red,' which, I own, I think characteristic and becoming."

We find the whole party at luncheon under the shadow of the Pyramids, in a highly characteristic sketch. Miss Gushington's diary contains the following contemporaneous entry :—

"Some picturesque Arabs—one of whom exactly embodied my notion of what Abd-el-Kader must be—grouped themselves around us, watching with friendly but unobtrusive interest the development of the luncheon-basket. They are, truly, a sympathetic people, and show the most intelligent appreciation of our manners and customs, and all belonging to us. Three silver spoons, disappeared in the most unaccountable manner towards the end of the repast. It was distressing to me in the extreme, as I feared that our amiable and picturesque visitants might fancy that their honour was called in question by the occurrence; indeed, I regret to say, that my companions were not noble-minded enough to repel the unworthy suspicion. They even insisted on searching one of the Arabs, who was in closer propinquity than the rest. The others proudly and hastily withdrew.

"The spoons have not been recovered.

"Mr. Andrew Mac Fishy persists in asserting his belief that Abd-el-Kader has swallowed them."

One of the most entirely laughable sketches perhaps ever produced, is poor Miss Gushington's gallop on the camel. Miss Impulsia's language is feeble compared with the vivid and almost frantic fun of the etching. Her account of the matter, however, deserves a reprint.

"I woke with a shock from the sleep which had overcome my sensibility to outward impressions. Good gracious! What spirit of evil had taken possession of my gentle camel? I found myself bounding over the sandy plain, at a pace which threatened dislocation of all my members! It was in vain that I grasped the horn of the saddle (which is the principal security of one's seat on a camel) with a mad desperation, that only served to fatigue my arms; those tremendous bounds lifted me out of the seat, and I soon found myself in the well-known but critical posture which Mlle. Eulalie Vol-au-Vent assumes in the 'Courier of St. Petersburg,' or the 'Wild Horse of the Prairies,' at Astley's Theatre. My serviceable little hat flew like a rocket from my head; my parasol mounted like a balloon; on and on we rushed; the scared cranes screamed above my head; the sand seemed all on fire beneath my camel's feet; the low hills fleeted by like dreams; the wind deafened me by its rush and roar against my ears; my breath was gone; my sight failed!—when suddenly all grew black, and silent, and still! I must have fainted, and, most fortunately, slid down the side of the distracted animal to which I was clinging, for I found myself (when conscious) bruised indeed and shaken, but sound and whole in limb, upon a heap of drifted sand."

We cannot close our allusion to Lady Gifford's remarkably clever illustrations without pointing special attention to the Hogarthian fidelity with which identities are preserved throughout the series. Artists can alone duly appreciate, and often fail to overcome this difficulty. To conceive and produce a thoroughly characteristic portrait, though no mean success, is comparatively easy; but to present the same face in action again and again, and under every variety of emotion, with so literal an identity that recognition never hesitates for a moment, is given to very few. Thackeray, notwithstanding his training in art, and the character and force of many of his serial illustrations, fails here.

As author and artist, Lady Gifford has here achieved a very great success in a really difficult walk, and has succeeded in raising the standard of public taste in the particular class of publications to which she has made so sparkling and characteristic a contribution.

A FIRE-SIDE GOSSIP ABOUT GHOSTS AND FAIRIES.

SUCH lore as the title of this paper describes furnishes the after-supper entertainment of many an Irish farmer's and peasant's fireside, during the long winter evenings. As an honest record of some of the multitude of similar stories which we have heard related with that pleasant integrity of faith, which gives them their chief zest, we venture to submit this paper.

Among the secondary proofs of the soul's immortal essence may be reckoned the desire, in some cases, and the fear in others, of communion with the spirits of those with whom we have lived, whom we have loved, or in whose character we have been interested. Were it not for this strong impulse, clairvoyants and table-rapping professors could never have made their standing good, and introduced so many of their nervous disciples to the lunatic asylum. It is pitiable to read, with reference to this subject, the lucubrations of men, erewhile hardheaded and sceptical enough in matters spiritual. Visitors to seances, and readers of the periodicals of rapping folk are well aware of the grovelling, and cheerless, and unspiritual character of the *quasi* communications made by Messieurs the table-sprites, always in accordance with the idiosyncrasy of their caller. They are not in possession of the happiness promised to the good, nor are they suffering for unrepented crimes committed in the flesh. They endure a sort of cheerless existence, and are more or less intelligent according to circumstances—some not having yet mastered the spelling-book. Of the bliss beyond what eye hath seen, ear heard, or imagination conceived, they know nothing, nor do they fear the gehenna of fire, the portion of the unrighteous. Of the sublime and glorious views and truths of revealed religion they are as unconscious as the blind mole is of the beauties of a sun-lit landscape. Yet the former hard-headed sceptic, now sunk in the debasing superstition of this modern necromancy, tells us that no further proof of the soul's future life is needful to him who consults the money-taking priestess of the carefully-covered table. No further need of reading books, hitherto considered as of divine inspiration, nor of attending public worship. The little round table of parlour or drawing-room is all-sufficient; and on it as on a domestic altar, sacrifices of prayer and praise will be offered to the dumb spirits, so soon as they shall have made some little decent advance in intelligence and education. Thus it is; people to whom belief in the superintendence of a creating and preserving Providence is a stumbling block, are willing slaves to the creatures of their own diseased imaginations.

Besides the blessed and reprobate angels, and the disembodied spirits of men, Sir Edward Bulwer gives us to understand that the atmosphere is alive with beings, of frightful mien; and that it requires only some cabalistic skill to break down the flimsy partition that separates them from our perception. Woe to the unfortunate wight whose eagerness for forbidden knowledge tempts him to remove this blessed barrier. He will then have for evermore a shadowy, indistinct, and horrible presence at his hearth, by his bed, or at his side when he walks abroad, and existence will become intolerable. It is a pity that Sir Edward has not suggested some arrangement by which these nondescripts might attend the summons of the priests and priestesses of the new superstition, instead of the spirits of just men and women.

Were we assured that narrators were always as accurate as they are frequently honest, we should conclude that ghostly visitations are as common in these countries, at this day, as they were in the darkest ages that have slowly swept over the earth. Let but a social party gather round the fire in country or town on a cold night, and anyone commence a weird tale connected with apparitions, and scarce a person in company will fail to relate something beyond what ears and eyes are accustomed to, which occurred, if not to himself, at all events to some intimate acquaintance, who would not utter a falsehood for any "earthly crowns," no more than the celebrated Miss Miggs.

Having never enjoyed the undesirable privilege of a forgathering with an unearthly appearance, though in our youth we had passed, many many times, at the dead hour through haunted glounthaans (glens), and across the haunted fords of Ath-na-Capail,* Ochnanayear, Ochayolthachawn, and many other eery aths and thubbers, we yet can bring to mind many of the true narratives we have heard at rustic fire-sides.

Of those we are about to relate, we are as sure of the good faith of the tellers as of any ordinary truth or fact that has occurred to us, but are yet of opinion that, could all circumstances connected with the occurrences be ascertained, everything related might probably be referred to natural causes. The narratives are not classified: we give them as they occur to memory, vouching for the thorough sincerity of the original reciters.

THE "COUNSELLOR'S" LADY.

Mr. Bronte, a "counsellor," high in the estimation of the solicitors of Dublin, was newly married, and lodged with his amiable and beautiful young wife, in C——street. The mistress of the house was as devoted to her lovable lodgers as any woman so circumstanced could be. She watched the young wife through her confinement and her after illness, consequent on bringing to the world a still-born infant. She did not rally, and was sent by order of the physician to a healthy suburb. She was often visited by her former good-natured and devoted city landlady, and though she seemed for a while to mend, she soon began to lose her strength—consumption had set in. At last she became persuaded that she would recover if she were allowed to return to her old apartments in the city, and her wish was gratified.

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* The first of these names is pronounced by the people round Castleboro', Och-na-goppal; the others are pronounced as here phonetically spelled. The English equivalents are, the "Ford of the Horse," the "Ford of the Evil Spirits," and the "Ford of the Naked Man."

For a few days the old agreeable associations and the sympathy of Mrs. Lorcan had a good effect; but her sorrowing husband and her intimate friends soon lost all hope, and her last hour drew near.

Mrs. Lorcan was in one of the upper rooms at an early hour of the morning, rocking one of her children in his cradle, when she was frightened by the sound of a furious wind rushing through the house: the doors banged, and the windows clashed. She ran down stairs on the moment to the room where Mrs. Bronte was lying. The nurse was in a corner of the room, and the maid supporting her dying mistress in a sitting posture. The poor lady was endeavouring to clear her throat of phlegm, but as soon as Mrs. Lorcan entered the room, she cried out, faintly, "Oh, Mrs. Lorcan! the Doctor, the Doctor—there opposite!"* They were her last words. She expired in a few moments.

Strange and horrible to say, it was found, on sending across the street to apprize the physician of the sad event, that precisely at the time when the violent wind had swept through the house he had had a fit in which he died.

A short time after her death the mistress of the house was coming down stairs in the dark, and when she was somewhere between the bedrooms and the drawing-rooms, she heard footsteps, the rustling of silk, and the well-known breathing of Mrs. Bronte, and all as if of a woman passing up stairs. When the subdued noise was heard, just between her and the wall, she stretched out her arm, and cried out in terror, "who is that?" No answer was returned, and it seemed to her as if the person had passed her, and was proceeding up to the apartment where Mrs. Bronte had died.

On hearing this narrative from the mouth of Mrs. Lorcan, we suggested that the sudden blast of wind had nothing supernatural about it, and that some lady lodging in the house might have really passed her on the stairs; but she was positive that the violent blast that shook the house was only for a moment, and that, from the inquiries she made on the other occasion, she was most certain that no living woman had gone up stairs on the evening in question. So, merely adding that we have taken no liberty with the relation beyond that of concealing the names, we leave our readers to their own conclusions.

As two other communications have reference to Dublin, they will naturally follow. Mrs. Lorcan is our authority for—

THE HAUNTED CORNER-HOUSE.

Where C—— and G—— streets cross, a house of many rooms forms one of the angles, and extends to some distance in both streets. Several years since, the occupier, unfortunately, hung himself in one of the rooms; and the next who took possession, was so worried with noises and tramplings, that he decamped. It fared no better with his successors, and in course of time Mrs. Lorcan, then a newly married woman, and gifted with the instincts of housekeeping, paid a visit to the owner to inquire the rent. He was moderate in his demands, but silent on the subject of the permanent tenant, and his nightly exercises. Mr. Simcox's lady, to whom Mrs. Lorcan was known, walked into the hall with her on pretence of seeing her to the door, but took that opportunity of bringing her up to the drawing-room, and mentioning the circumstances just related. "Mr. Simcox," said she, "is like most men, and treats a thing of this kind as a mere fable, but you may depend on what I say to be true." Mrs. L. took another house in the same street, and of course kept an eye on the large house at the corner, retaining no grateful sense of Mr. S.'s skill in keeping a secret. She observed that the tenants never remained beyond a year, and at last, though it was in a respectable neighbourhood, it came to receive no new master. Its present lot is that of a large house let "in tenements," the room in which the fatal deed was done, being devoted to lumber. If any unusual noise is heard, every one is at liberty to attribute it to a belated neighbour overtaken in liquor. So the neighbourhood has ceased to be thrown into a state, &c., &c., &c. Mrs. Lorcan, who, though an excellent mistress over lodgers and children, is weak on the subject of a neighbourly gossip, has learned from her servant, who has learned the fact from an inmate of the large corner-house, that the walking at unusual hours and the noises from the haunted room have not ceased.

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* The physician who attended her through her illness lived on the opposite side of the street.

The authority for the next ghostly spiriting is the confidential children's maid of the sufferers.

THE HAUNTED HOUSE IN BRIDE-STREET.

Mr. Mollan, grocer in Bride-street, was left a widower, with the charge of several children, some of them young girls; and very soon after their mother's death, steps began to be heard up stairs, and down stairs, and chiefly in the nursery. Great alarm and fright prevailed; and the maid and the children appealed to the master of the house, who pooh-poohed their fears. They suspected, however, from his own care-worn looks, that he also had received disagreeable visits. The poor children began to lose the natural cheer of youth, and to be found with scared looks, especially towards night; and little wonder, for steps were constantly heard pacing across the nursery, and, sometimes, they would be conscious, from the low sound of breathing and sighing, that some one was standing beside their beds. One night, when the maid was following Mr. Mollan up stairs from the cellar, she distinctly saw a small man, with a red cap on, following close on her master's steps, and holding him by the skirt of his coat. This was the only appearance; and it was the more remarkable, as all were of opinion that it was the spirit of the mother, who was showing her anxiety for her daughters in this disagreeable way.

At last, as Anne Neil, the maid, was one evening sitting at the kitchen table, employed at drying and drawing out laces and frills, with her Italian iron on the table before her, and the master sitting at the other side, and smoking (he had come into the kitchen for that purpose), she was sensible of the presence of her late mistress passing close by her in the direction of the fire, and could distinguish the words said in a whisper, "Ochone, ochone, ochone!" "Oh, master!" said she, "did you hear that?" "What, you fool!" said he. "Oh! my mistress's ghost passing by me and moaning." "It's all imagination," said he—but he spoke in a vexed tone—"Don't encourage the children in these nonsensical whims."

That night, the eldest daughter, who commonly seemed in more terror than her sisters, was sleeping next Anne Neil. She was all at once wakened up, became conscious of some awful presence, a cold perspiration burst out all over her, and she tried to cry out, but was not able. In this state she received three severe slaps on the shoulders, and fell into a swoon. The father, hearing in the morning what had happened, made up his mind to abandon the house as soon as he could; and in a few weeks was settled in Dorset-street. The persecution, or warning, or whatever it was, did not follow the family to their new residence.

Some of the persons who experienced this domestic visitation were known to the writer, and were persons who would not wilfully tell a falsehood.

THE WOMAN IN WHITE.

Pat Gill, of the county of Kildare, was driving towards Dublin, with a load of country produce. He had made a comfortable seat for himself on the car, and had plenty of hay about him and under him. He was pleasantly employed thinking of nothing in particular, dozing, and giving an eye to the proceedings of his beast. He was between the mill of Baltracy and the cross-roads of Borheen, when he was startled by the appearance of a woman, dressed in long white clothes, crossing the fence, and advancing into the road. She came up to the horse, and walked on with him, close by his neck. The driver chucked the beast's head to the opposite side, for fear he should tread on her feet or long robes, but she still kept as close to him as before, and sometimes he thought he could see the lower part of the horse's fore leg through her dress. The matter had now become very serious. He could not keep his eyes off the apparition; and he felt his whole frame covered with a cold perspiration. He became bewildered, and could not determine either on going on or stopping. So, the horse, finding matters left to himself, jogged on, apparently unconscious of his fellow-wayfarer.* The centre of the cross-roads of Borheen is or was occupied by a patch of green turf; and when they came to its edge, the white figure stood still, while a portion of the shaft of the car on that side seemed to pass through her. Gill, observing this, drew the beast at once to the other side, crying in a voice made tremulous by terror, "By your leave, ma'am!" On went horse and car, the edges of the load preventing him from seeing the white form. Having advanced two or three yards, he looked back, fearing to see a mangled body on the road behind him, but he saw instead, the white appearance standing in the centre of the plot of grass, her hand seeming to shade her eyes, as she looked earnestly after him. Terrified as he was, he never turned his gaze till a bend in the road cut off the view.

The neighbourhood of Borheen, Baltracy, and Rathcoffey, was blessed, or the contrary, in times past, by a fortune-teller and charm-concocter, Molly Anthony by name. So unedifying was her life and conversation, that the priest refused to have any religious services performed for her after her death. She left a son, who had acquired some skill in curing cattle by herbs, and did not pretend to any supernatural gifts. A farmer, Pat Behn, at whose house he had remained about a fortnight, and who was well pleased with his performances, was passing near the green hill in his jaunting car, accompanied by Jack Anthony, the doctor, when, on a sudden, an old woman in a red cloak appeared to them between the bushes on the road-fence, and cried, "Jack, it's time for you to come." "Sir," said Jack to his patron, "will you excuse me for a minute, while I go to say a word to this neighbour of mine?" "Oh, to be sure!" Jack got on the fence, and passed through the bushes, but the farmer was surprised at not subsequently hearing the sound of his or her voice. He waited for about the space of a minute, and then bade his servant climb the fence, and see if Jack was about to return. The servant did as he was told, and the master observed him look along the inner side of the *ditch*, now to the left, and then to the right, and then straight before him, with a perplexed expression of face. The master sprung down, joined his servant, and found he had a long range of vision right and left, and up the sloping side of the green hill, and no bushes or rocks to afford concealment. Neither Jack nor the red-cloaked woman were in view. It was months before the doctor presented himself before his patron, and even then his account of his disappearance was not consistent in all its parts. Our informant was acquainted with Pat Behn and Jack Anthony, and heard the former relate the adventure.

Mrs. FitzPatrick, a native of the Queen's County, has furnished us with the next tale.

THE QUEEN'S COUNTY GHOST.

SQUIRE GARRET (let us say), whose seat lay near Kilcavan, was not a pattern for faith or morals while above mould, and afterwards caused considerable annoyance to his surviving friends and dependents. No night passed without the noises usual in such cases being heard. Doors would be flung open, keys heard turning in locks, plates and dishes hurled down from the dresser on the kitchen floor, tables overturned, and chairs flung about, yet in the morning nothing would be found out of its place. The family, at last, removed to another manor-house at some distance, but the steward, and old coachman, and a few hangers-on, remained behind. None suffered more from the ghostly and ghastly freaks of the late master than the coachman. When once the night came he could not reckon on a moment's rest. If he attempted to take a nap in the great chair, his wig would be plucked off, or the chair pulled from under him, and he would occasionally find himself pinched and bruised black and blue. At last, he seemed utterly callous and indifferent to these marks of interest in him evinced by the old Squire. Perhaps he was more obnoxious to this persecution for having aided the defunct in his designs upon the innocence of sundry young women during his reign on earth. There was one peculiarity in his visitations; he never made himself visible to more than one person in a company; and though he adopted the appearance of black dog, or boar, or bull, on these occasions, the individual singled out always knew the old Squire under his disguises.

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* This circumstance is not in harmony with the general belief of spirits being visible to horses, who, while their riders are unconscious of anything unusual, snort, tremble, turn round, and escape from the terrible sight, if they can.

The wives, sons, and daughters of the neighbouring farmers once took it in head to club and have a ball in the big house, for which they readily got permission. All was as merry as music, and drink, and an assemblage of young "boys" and girls could make it, when, in the height of the festivity, the old gentleman took it into his head to become visible in a hideous shape to the aunt (then a young woman) of Mrs. FitzPatrick. She shrieked out, and fainted, and the universal mirth and jollity came to an abrupt conclusion. When she was brought to herself, and related what had occurred, there was a general dispersion, and that was the last attempt at a ball in the big house.

THE FAIRY RATH OF CLONNAGOWAN.

In the townland of Clonnagowan, not far from the scene of the last narrative, stands a rath, which, about forty years since, was studded with old thorn trees. A Mr. Kinsella, to whom this, with the surrounding lands, was leased, took it into his head that he would grub up these ugly trees, make firewood of them, and get a good crop of wheat out of the hitherto useless circle. He was warned by the neighbours that if he attempted to do so, the *good people* would make him suffer; for, time out of mind, one person or another had seen them dancing, and holding their night festivals among these old stunted thorns. Nothing could daunt him. He fell to work, and began to grub up one of the trees, and had removed the sods and earth round it, when he was called off on some pressing business. He was not able to resume his labour in the rath that day; and so at night he retired to rest, with intent to be early at his task next morning.

About midnight, he was wakened by some unusual noises; and on opening his eyes he found the room all illuminated, though the moon was not yet shining, nor was there an appearance of candle or lamp any where. By this light he could see about a score of little fellows in green frocks and red caps, the latter shaped like the fox-glove bell or the old Irish birredh. They began to move round the bed, and point their fingers, and make frightful faces at him, half the company moving one way, just close by the bed, and the other half moving in the other direction, outside them. He almost lost his senses in consequence of the confusion of their movements, and the spiteful gestures they were making. He attempted to roar out once or twice, but could not utter a sound, and he could only look and become more and more stupified and frightened.

At last there was a pause, and the mischievous creatures scattered themselves over the room, and seizing on everything that came in their way, they piled them upon the poor man, till he thought that the weight of the whole house was crushing him; and so disturbed was his mind, that he fancied the bed was pressing him down as well as bearing him up; and the eyes of the little fellows were watching him through the legs of tables and chairs, and shooting icicles of fire and ice into his brain. Then lest the weight should be too light, they would spring up on the heap of furniture, and jump and prance till he could feel the hard wood and iron piercing in between his ribs, and squeezing his stomach flat on his backbone, and almost crushing his bones to the marrow. He was not able afterwards to tell how relief came to him. When he awoke in the morning he found the different articles of furniture each occupying its own place; but his bones and muscles felt so sore and bruised, that he could hardly stir them; and his skin was blue, and purple, and black. The first use he made of his tongue was to direct his sons to repair to the rath, and put the removed clay and sods into their places of yesterday morning. Perhaps it was owing to the subsidence of the anger of the *Duinne Sidhe*, on witnessing the reparation that he speedily recovered from the effects of his bruises, and his skin resumed its natural hue. Mrs. F. not having visited her native place for many years, is unable to say what appearance the rath now presents. Near this village of Clonnagowan is the farm-house of Clonnaquinn, the bawn of which lies directly in—

THE FAIRIES' PASS.

It is known that the hill-folk in their nightly excursions, and the visits of one tribe to another, go in a straight line, gliding as it were within a short distance of the ground; and if they meet any strange obstacles in their track, they bend their course above them or at one side, but always with much displeasure.

A farmer named Finglas, a stranger to the old ways of the country, took this farm, and was not at all satisfied with the accommodation offered by the old farm-house and yard. There was neither cow-house nor stable, except an excuse for such conveniences at the end of the yard. He would have new buildings made at the side, and dug out the foundation at once; but was warned that the fairies' pass lay directly across the bawn, and that it would excite their sovereign displeasure to find stable, or barn, or cow-house in their way. Unhappily, Finglas, though married to a Roman Catholic wife, was himself a benighted Presbyterian, and as such a contemner of all reverence due to the Good People. But see the result of pretending to be wiser than your neighbours. Scarcely were the buildings thatched, and the cows and horses installed in their niches, when the wisdom of the old people became evident. One animal after another, without apparent cause, began to refuse its food, languished, and died. In vain was recourse made to the most skilful cattle doctors. Their medicines proved naught, and fairy men or women would have nothing to do with the devoted beasts; they were on the fairies' path. Not until three-fourths of his cattle were slain by the elf-bolts, was Finglas overruled, and at last persuaded to construct new buildings at the end of the bawn.

In a locality still so much under the dominion of the fallen representatives of the powers once openly worshipped in the island, it was little to be wondered at, that a very industrious and handy man who lived some forty years since there, should have been thought gifted by evil spirits in return for making over to them the reversion of his soul. In his instance, this treaty seems to have been entirely unnecessary. It gave him not the slightest disturbance to have three comely daughters of his given up to neighbouring people of influence, or to be a gainer by the unholy arrangement. The people were thoroughly sure that he was empowered to do the work of ten men, though he never seemed in any hurry, or to exert himself beyond an even, easy-going rate. While threshing he was observed to be always whistling a peculiar tune, which was supposed to be a needful ceremony or act of worship paid to the fiends.

Before we have done with Mrs. Fitzpatrick and her birth-place, we must not omit the mention of a banshee dressed in a red cloak and old-fashioned bonnet, whom she solemnly declared to have been seen and heard by one of her aunts, keening beneath a bed-room window in the old farmhouse of Kilcavan, immediately before the death of one of the old people. They were of pure Celtic blood, and as such, entitled to this dismal privilege.

Having done our duty by Dublin, Kildare, and Queen's County, let us be permitted to pay a flying visit to Wexford.

THE HAUNTED MANOR HOUSE NEAR THE SLANEY.

On the right bank of the Slaney, below Enniscorthy, stands an old manor house, called Bundharrig. It is several years since the latest representatives of the old family that enjoyed and suffered the comforts and crosses of human life in the fine old mansion deserted it. Hall and pleasure grounds remained without an occupier for years. More than one observant and belated returner from fair or market of Enniscorthy, with vision affected by drugged whisky, were afterwards heard to aver solemnly, that as they passed the gates, they could see coach after coach whip round the circular walk, drive up to the hall-door, and the occupants enter the hall. Through the lighted first-floor windows, bright and dark figures of women and men would be seen flitting to-and-fro, but no sounds could be heard from horses' feet, or coach wheels, or dancers, or musicians.

At last the place was leased to a Munster farmer, who, hearing the reports when it was too late, made the best of a bad bargain. He got a Mass celebrated in the ball-room, and neither lord, nor lady, nor musician, ever troubled the house again. However, the ghostly visitants had still the privilege of the gravel drive and the semicircle before the hall-door. The servant-maid of the new occupant, still in the family, declares that one night, while off her guard against ghostly tricks, and standing at the gate, she opened it to a stately coach, guided by a coachman, with the old-fashioned appointments of lace and three-cornered hat. Recalling the tradition immediately after, she made her way to the back entrance, in considerable alarm. The writer has seen and spoken with the Munster farmer--and his daughter and son-in-law are our authorities for the legend.

When very young, we heard ghost stories enough to fill a volume, but are now unable to recall any perfectly, except one, which may be called

THE GHOST IN GRAIGUE.

A LADY in the neighbourhood of that old town, much celebrated for her charities, died, and great sorrow was felt for her loss. Many Masses were celebrated, and many prayers offered up for the repose of her soul, and there was a moral certainty of her salvation among her acquaintance. One evening, after the family had retired to rest, a servant girl in the house, a great favourite with her late mistress, was sitting beside the fire, enjoying the dreamy comfort of a hard-worked person after the day's fatigues, and just before the utter forgetfulness of sleep. Her mind was wandering to her late loved mistress, when she was startled by a sensation in her instep, as if it were trodden upon. "Bad manners to you for a dog," said she, suspecting the "coley" of the house to be the offender. But to her great terror, when she looked down, and round the hearth, she could see no living thing. "Who's that?" she cried out, with the teeth chattering in her head. "It is I," was the answer, and the dead lady became visible to her. "Oh, mistress darling!" said she, "What is disturbing you, and can I do anything for you?" "You can do a little," said the spirit, "and that is the reason I have appeared to you. Every day and every hour some one of my family and friends are lamenting me, and speaking of my goodness, and that is tormenting me in the other world. All my charities were done only for the pleasure of having myself spoken well of, and they are now prolonging my punishment. The only real good I ever did was to give, once, half-a-crown to a poor scholar that was studying to be a priest, and charging him to say nothing about it. That was the only good act that followed me into the other world. And now you must tell my husband and my children to speak well of my past life no more, or I will haunt you night after night." The appearance, the next moment, was no longer there, and the poor girl fainted the moment it vanished. When she recovered, she hastened into her settle-bed, and covered herself up, head and all, and cried and sobbed till morning.

Every one wondered the next day to see such a troubled countenance. But she went through her business one way or other, though she could not make up her mind to tell her master what she had seen and heard. She dreaded the quiet hour of rest; and well she might, for the displeased lady visited her again at the same hour, and reproached her for her neglect. Three times she endured the dread visits before she made the required revelation.

For the next tale, belonging to later times, our informants are the same as for the Slaney-bank story.

DROOCHAN'S GHOST.

A TOWNLAND north of Mount Leinster is infested by the above-named evil spirit. Within a few years, sundry people returning from a cross-roads' dance, on a Sunday evening, just as night had set in, were greatly terrified. Their road lay along the side of a tolerably steep hill. And as they were coming on, and chatting, they heard the most dreadful cries above them, and a noise as of rocks tumbling down directly to crush them. They ran away at their best speed, and still heard the unearthly yells higher up, and the dreadful sounds, as if half the rocks and loose stones on the height were sweeping down, crossing the road behind them, and plunging headlong into the stream at the bottom of the hill. Terror and dismay ruled the neighbourhood that night, and for a week longer, when the fright of the Sabbath-breakers was turned to anger and shame. The wag of the next village had carried an empty cask to the summit of the hill, supplied the inside with some stones, fastened the end securely, and just as the gossipers came below, he let slip the engine.

Droochan, the bugbear of the district, had been a man of evil life, and consequently entitled, after his death, to annoy all peaceable subjects that had the ill-luck to live in his neighbourhood.

A small family in that blighted vicinity were taking their evening meal, in their little parlour, when they were alarmed by their servant-girl rushing across the hall, from the kitchen, and crying out—"Oh, masther, masther, Droochan's ghost! He's in the kitchen." After fifteen minutes spent in exclamations, hasty questions, confused answers, and researches, the following dialogue took place:—"What shape did he appear to you in?" "Oh, I didn't see him at all!" "Who saw him?" "The cats." "How do you know?" "Ah, sure there wasn't a breath stirrin', when them two crathurs cocked their ears, stood up on their hind legs, wud their eyes stanin' in their heads, and sparred at one another with their hands—I mean their fore paws. Then they let a yowl, as if heaven and earth was coming together, and run off into the coal shed. And what ghost could they be seeing only Droochan's?"

About four miles east of Baltinglass stands the hill of Bally Carrigeen (rocky pass or town), and on its top a large ring of rounded flags, about nine yards in diameter, and called *Fan-a-Cool's griddlestones.* On the side of the neighbouring eminence are two long strips of turf, much greener than that by which they are surrounded. These are the marks of the resting-places of Fion MacCuil and his wife, who, when they rose in the early morning, descended the slope, washed their faces in the stream, and baked the cakes for their breakfast on a griddle supported by these flags. However, we have not much to say of them on this occasion. In their neighbourhood, on the crest of another hill, is the church-yard of Kilranelagh, where no corpse of Protestant man or woman has ever been allowed to rest. The boundary-wall is formed of loose stones, and the top is very narrow in comparison with its base. Every man attending a funeral brings a stone picked up on his way, and throws it on the circular fence, and so the mighty ring has grown. Outside the boundary, on the face of the steep, is a deep round well, with an opening from top to bottom in the portion of its wall looking down hill, so that it is accessible on that side. In the inner surface of this wall are ledges, and these are plentifully provided with wooden cups—every-one interring in the grave-yard the corpse of a child under five years of age, providing one of these vessels. The spirit of the latest interred is obliged to keep watch and ward over the sacred enclosure, till the next funeral; and so when two convoys are approaching at the same time, there sometimes occur unseemly races and struggles. Having sketched our scenery, we proceed with the legend of

THE KILRANELAGH SPIRIT.

Two men repairing to their homes, just in the twilight, were obliged to pass through this church-yard, or take a considerable circuit. They had come up the hill, and were beginning to proceed through the cemetery, when they heard, just on their left, and apparently proceeding from a tomb, the most awful groans and frightful out-cries, and a shower of red-hot cinders fell on them. They retreated down hill in great dismay; yet, after getting to some distance, they plucked up courage, and returned. They were received in a more fearful fashion this time, and once again fled in terror. Unaccountable as it may appear, they made a third attempt; but this time the noise was more appalling than ever, and a terrible being, with a wild outcry, sprang up from behind the monument, and rushed on them. Down the hill they flew like deer, and after a wild flight, took refuge in the first cabin they reached. This was their version. We supply another from the mouth of the fiend, then a young stripling, and now a plodding citizen of Dublin, and proprietor of a farm near this extensive and ancient cemetery.

He was seated on the stony enclosure when he saw, in the gloom, the two men approaching up hill. He at once conceived the design of frightening them, and for this purpose ensconced himself behind a tomb with a provision of small stones. All the ghostly machinery consisted in the groans and howlings he contrived to make, and the showers of pebbles he discharged on the adventurers. At the third attempt he himself was startled by a rustling among the dry weeds and stones behind, and his headlong charge was the result of his panic. Of course, he managed not to come up with the fugitives.

We have set down a variety of ghostly anecdotes—some accounted for by natural causes, others not.

Over this rude, but, to our mind, not uninteresting lore, we shall not linger in philosophic disquisition; although, were we so disposed, the unmistakable good faith of the narrators of the unexplained and mysterious portion of this little collection would warrant graver discussion than the rappings and the other phenomena relied on by the professional necromancers of the West End drawing-rooms.*

A GAME OF CHESS.

TERRACE and lawn are white with frost,
Whose fretwork flowers upon the panes—
A mocking dream of summer, lost
'Mid winter's icy chains.

White-hot, indoors, the great logs gleam,
Veiled by a flickering flame of blue:
I see my love as in a dream—
Her eyes are azure, too.

She binds her hair behind her ears
(Each little ear so like a shell),
Touches her ivory Queen, and fears
She is not playing well.

For me, I think of nothing less:
I think how those pure pearls become her—
And which is sweetest, winter chess
Or garden strolls in summer.

O linger, frost, upon the pane!
O faint blue flame, still softly rise!
O, dear one, thus with me remain,
That I may watch thine eyes!

MORTIMER COLLINS.

*** The only liberty taken with these narratives is the concealment (in some instances) of the genuine names.**

THEIR MAJESTY'S SERVANTS.

FEW persons who have not essayed in their day to collect the lives of actors, and of those whose career has been essentially connected with the stage, have any adequate notion of the vastness of the contribution which English literature owes to this department of biography and narrative. Unequal, desultory, and often not altogether reliable, as such memoirs are, they are yet, on the whole, the most fascinating, and by no means the least instructive reading in which an idle man can engage. The Gipsy life, the wandering habits, the gaiety and privations, the deeply tragic and sometimes splendid vicissitudes of the actor's life, give to the story something of the interest of the desultory and satiric old Spanish romance; and its connexion with literature and men of letters, and sometimes, in the character of patrons, with men of public celebrity, of a different kind, and, above all, their unconsciously minute and spirited painting of contemporary manners, give to these generally careless and often brilliant records, a very special and permanent value. Nothing can be more capricious than the selection of the subjects of this kind of biography: while such men as Betterton and Sheridan are undistinguished by a memoir, we have an almost illimitable harvest of minor biographies. To these we are far from objecting—quite the reverse; but the omissions cause bleak and awful chasms in the series, such as no after industry and enthusiasm can supply.

But when this immense collection of biographical lore has been scanned and sifted, the labour of a writer in Doctor Doran's track is but begun;

"Their Majesty's Servants: Annals of the English Stage, from Thomas Betterton to Edmund Kean." By Dr. Doran, F.S.A. In two volumes. London: Wm. H. Allen and Co.

and a new and still wider field opens in the contemporary essays, diaries, letters, and even newspapers and magazines. Such a work, then, as Doctor Doran's, grasping this scattered and voluminous literature, extracting and fixing its essence with a discriminating and vigorous chemistry, and so bringing all that is most instructive, diverting, and curious in his charming theme, within reasonable compass, and in the form of connected and highly agreeable narrative, under the eye of the careless reader, is no mean monument of zeal, diligence, and judgment.

He has given us here a work which, possessing all the charm of lively and romantic fiction, is still, in the most rigorous sense, a history; comprehensive, complete, and pregnant with valuable social illustration, as well as with matter for profound and sad meditation.

Doctor Doran's plan is strictly and simply chronological. And the book expands and warms into actual life with the stage of the Restoration, of which we have so many lively and invaluable contemporary pictures.

Of course we have a good deal of pretty Nell Gwyn; not so detailed as Mr. Cunningham's pleasant monogram, but written with appropriate spirit, grace and lightness. We can hardly bring ourselves to believe altogether in the story of her very low origin. Though Mistress Nelly could be a little coarse at times, there seems to have been an essential elegance and a bright and delicate wit which bespeak early and habitual intimacy with gentle manners. The selling of herrings in her case, as in that of beautiful Peg Woffington in aftertimes, is, we suspect, wholly a myth. There has always been a tendency to exaggeration of this kind in the early and conjectural biography of actresses. Mistress Nelly was, we all know, a good-natured and fascinating scamp. The circumstances of her departure from the parental roof were probably not very creditable. Her London life commenced as that of an outcast, and she was forced to live by her wits, which luckily were bright and shifty. Such people do not care to describe early days and adventures too minutely. And conjecture and satire fill in the vacant canvas with a coarse extravagance. Poor Nelly! Good nature, gaiety, beauty, and intelligence, are always so engaging; a certain sentimental tenderness still lingers about her memory—the shadow of her living popularity. There is a very pretty engraving of Nell Gwyn in the collection of prologues and epilogues. From what portrait is it taken? An original, full-length picture, fair, animated, and so pretty, is in the possession of the Earl of Dunraven. No doubt Nelly was a frequent sitter; and many scattered portraits remain as yet unsuspected by the public. Pepys, that delightful gossip and indefatigable frequenter of the playhouses, is full of her. Nell, as we all know, was the maternal origin of the ducal house of St. Albans, a second time infused with theatric blood in its matrimonial alliance with Mrs. Coutts—the famous and beautiful Miss Mellon—whose amusing memoirs many of our readers are, no doubt, well acquainted with.

Dr. Doran is severe upon poor Nelly. Notwithstanding his rigorous impeachment, however, we still cling to the old tradition of her kindness and popularity. There are abundant evidences in her short career, so sad and brilliant, of that charity which covereth a multitude of sins. Instances of her good-natured munificence are not wanting, and her contemporary reputation for benevolence is undoubted. "For such a person," says Doctor Doran, indignantly, "the pure and pious Bishop Kenn was once called upon to yield up an apartment in which he lodged." In the cause of historic truth, however, and as throwing, we think, a side-light upon the character of poor Nelly, we must complete the story. Kenn was no bishop, but a poor Churchman, at the time. He owed his bishoprick, however, to his refusal. "Where is the little man who refused to let Nelly lie in his lodgings?" as nearly as we remember, were the words in which Charles sought out Kenn for the vacant mitre. Charles was not a man to enrage his mistress for a caprice of conscience. Nelly and he must often have talked over the incident together; and we think it must rest upon the mind of any person tolerably acquainted with human nature, and that phase of it which is termed "the world," as an irresistible, though indirect, evidence of the sweet and forgiving nature of wayward and pleasant Nelly, that his scruple was remembered to his honour, and the man who refused to open his door to her, with a sad reverence sought out for the vacant dignity.

Of the stage from the Restoration to the Revolution, our principal authorities are the invaluable Pepys, and the retrospective and graphic portraits preserved to us in old Colley Cibber's masterly "Apology"—one of the pleasantest and finest combinations of biography and criticism extant in English literature.

Betterton's long reign of fifty years, connecting the seventeenth with the eighteenth century, furnishes some of the finest and most interesting pages in Dr. Doran's work. We are acquainted with no biography of that great actor and gentleman, except the miserable sham published shortly after his death, in 1710. This book—the merest catch-penny—contains, when sifted, scarcely more than the registry of his birth and death, the name of his wife, and a list of his principal characters. Here, then, our author has been thrown altogether upon the resources of his devious and extensive reading; and to make up the sum of his biography in minute and desultory contributions, collected with laudable industry and judgment from the wide range of scattered contemporary records. He has given us a portrait distinct in outline, clear in colour, and altogether so noble and life-like, that, considering alike his difficulties and the result, we are disposed to accept it as, perhaps, his finest sketch. He first presents young Betterton on the boards of Lincoln's Inn Fields, in 1661.

> "On a December night, 1661, there is a crowded house at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields. The play is 'Hamlet,' with young Mr. Betterton, who has been two years on the stage, in the part of the Dane. The Ophelia is the real object of the young fellow's love, charming Mistress Saunderson. Old ladies and gentlemen, repairing in capacious coaches to this representation, remind one another of the lumbering and crushing of carriages about the old playhouse in the Blackfriars, causing noisy tumults which drew indignant appeals from the Puritan housekeepers, whose privacy was sadly disturbed.
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> * * * * * * *
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> "At length the audience are all safely housed, and eager. Indifferent enough, however, they are, during the opening scenes. The fine gentlemen laugh loudly, and comb their periwigs in the "best rooms." The fops stand erect in the boxes, to show how folly looks in clean linen; and the orange nymphs, with their costly entertainment of fruit from Seville, giggle and chatter, as they stand on the benches below, with old and young admirers, proud of being recognised in the boxes. The whole Court of Denmark is before them; but not till the words, ''Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,' fall from the lips of Betterton, is the general ear charmed, or the general tongue arrested. Then, indeed, the vainest fops and pertest orange-girls look round and listen too. The voice is so low, and sad and sweet; the modulation so tender, the dignity so natural, the grace so consummate, that all yield themselves silently to the delicious enchantment. 'It's beyond imagination,' whispers Mr. Pepys to his neighbour, who only answers with a long and low-drawn '*Hush!*'"

The picture of the old days of the illustrious and faithful couple is too pretty to be passed by :—

> "Fifty years after these early triumphs, an aged couple resided in one of the best houses in Russell-street, Covent Garden, the walls of which were covered with pictures, prints, and drawings, selected with taste and judgment. They were still a handsome pair. The venerable lady, indeed, looks pale and somewhat saddened. The gleam of April sunshine which penetrates the apartment cannot win her from the fire. She is Mrs. Betterton; and ever and anon she looks with a sort of proud sorrow on her aged husband. His fortune, nobly earned, has been diminished by "speculation," but the means whereby he achieved it are his still; and Thomas Betterton, in the latter years of Queen Anne, is the chief glory of the stage, even as he was in the last year of King Charles. The lofty column, however, is a little shaken. It is not a ruin, but is beautiful in its decay. Yet, that it should decay at all is a source of so much tender anxiety to the actor's wife, that her senses suffer disturbance, and there may be seen in her features something of the distraught Ophelia of half a century ago."

We come now to his last meeting with that judicious and affectionate audience, who, to the close, were so proud of their Roscius :—

> "It is the 13th of April, 1710—his benefit night; and the tears are in the lady's eyes, and a painful sort of smile on her trembling lips, for Betterton misses her as he goes

forth that afternoon to take leave, as it proved, of the stage for ever. He is in such pain from gout that he can scarcely walk to his carriage; and how is he to enact the noble and fiery Melantius in that ill-named drama of horror, 'The Maid's Tragedy'? Hoping for the best, the old player is conveyed to the theatre, built by Sir John Vanbrugh, in the Haymarket, the site of which is now occupied by the 'Opera-house.' Through the stage-door he is carried in loving arms to his dressing-room. At the end of an hour Wilkes is there, and Pinkethman, and Mrs. Barry, all dressed for their parts; and agreeably disappointed to find the Melantius of the night robed, armoured, and beswordcd, with one foot in a buskin and the other in a slipper. To enable him even to wear the latter, he had first thrust his inflamed foot into water; but stout as he seemed, trying his strength to-and-fro in the room, the hand of Death was at that moment descending on the grandest of English actors."

The annals of the theatre abound in many instances of such histrionic heroism. Having gone so far let us see him on the stage, and wait till the curtain descends for the last time upon that famous actor.

"The house rose to receive him who had delighted themselves, their sires, and their grandsires. The audience were packed 'like Norfolk biffins.' The edifice itself was only five years old, and when it was a-building, people laughed at the folly which reared a new theatre in the country, instead of in London; for in 1705, all beyond the rural Haymarket was open field, straight away westward and northward. That such a house could ever be filled, was set down as an impossibility; but the achievement was accomplished on this eventful benefit night; when the popular favourite was about to utter his last words, and to belong thenceforward only to the history of the stage he had adorned.

"There was a shout which shook him, as Lysippus uttered the words, 'Noble Melantius!' which heralded his coming. Every word which could be applied to himself was marked by a storm of applause, and when Melantius said of Amintor—

'His youth did promise much, and his ripe years
Will see it all performed,'

a murmuring comment ran round the house, that this had been effected by Betterton himself. Again, when he bids Amintor, 'Hear thy friend, who has more years than thou,' there were probably few who did not wish that Betterton were as young as Wilkes; but when he subsequently thundered forth the famous passage, 'My heart will never fail me,' there was a very tempest of excitement, which was carried to its utmost height, in thundering peal on peal of unbridled approbation, as the great Rhodian gazed full on the house, exclaiming:—

'My heart
And limbs are still the same: my will as great
To do you service!'

No one doubted more than a fractional part of this assertion; and Betterton, acting to the end under a continued fire of '*Bravoes!*' may have thrown more than the original meaning into the phrase—

'That little word was worth all sounds
That ever I shall hear again!'

"Few were the words he was destined ever to hear again; and the subsequent prophecy of his own certain and proximate death, on which the curtain slowly descended, was fulfilled eight-and-forty hours after they were uttered."

We have a great deal of pleasant gossip about the poets, their works, fortunes, and quarrels. The field of dramatic, even more than of histrionic criticism, has been travelled over so often and in such good company, that little remains for new discovery or remark. Doctor Doran, however, gives us a great deal of just as well as amusing criticism and analysis, pointed by anecdote, and illustrated with parallels and side-lights supplied by his own large reading. As an average sample of his manner, we quote the sentence in which he takes leave of half-a-dozen of our old-world dramatic celebrities.

"Davenant achieved a good estate, and was buried in Westminster Abbey, like a gentleman. Dryden, with less to bequeath, was interred in the same place, without organ or ceremony, two choristers walking before the body, candle in hand, and singing an ode of Horace—like a poet. His victim, Tom Shadwell, acquired wealth fairly; he lies in Chelsea Church, but his son raised a monument to his memory in the Abbey, that he might be in thus much as great a man as his satirist. Congreve, too, is there, after enjoying a greater fortune than the others together had ever built up, and leaving £10,000 of it to Henrietta, Duchess of Marlborough, who so valued the 'honour and pleasure of his company' when living, that, as the next best thing, she sat of an evening with his 'wax figure,' after he was dead. Among the dead there, also, rest Cibber, Vanbrugh, and Bowe, of whom the first, too careless of his money affairs, died the poorest man."

The young Duchess, however, had written "the honour and happiness of his company." It was wicked old Sarah who misread the sentence for the sake of a sneer; and said she could not perceive the honour, whatever pleasure there might have been in it. Doctor Doran, no doubt, remembered the true reading; but concurring in the justice of the old lady's sarcasm, he has suffered her sly interpretation to stand unchallenged in his pages.

In his usual agreeable and rapid way he describes the mystification practised on the theatrical world of Paris, respecting Vanbrugh's "Relapse."

"Of Vanbrugh's ten or eleven plays, that which has longest kept the stage is the 'Relapse,' still acted, in its altered form, by Sheridan, as the 'Trip to Scarborough.' This piece was produced at the Theatre de l'Odeon, in Paris, in the Spring of 1862, as a posthumous comedy of Voltaire's! It was called the 'Comte de Boursoufle,' and had a 'run.' The story ran with it that Voltaire had composed it in his younger days for private representation; that he had then touched it up, and that the manuscript had only recently been discovered by the lucky individual who persuaded the manager of the Odeon to produce it on his stage! The bait took. All the French theatrical world in the capital flocked to the Faubourg St Germain to witness a new play by Voltaire. Critics examined the plot, philosophized on its humour, applauded its absurdities, enjoyed its wit, and congratulated themselves on the circumstance that the Voltairean wit especially was as enjoyable then as in the preceding century! Of the authorship they had no doubt whatever; for, said they, if Voltaire did not write this piece, who *could* have written it? The reply was given at once from this country; but when the mystification was exposed, the French critics gave no sign of awarding honour where honour was due; and probably this translation of the 'Relapse,' may figure in future French editions as an undoubted work by Voltaire."

We have here a collection of obituary notes very striking in their collective moral.

"Better men than either of the last sleep in humbler graves. Poor Nat Lee, tottering homeward from the Bull and Harrow, on a winter's night, and with more punch under his belt than his brain could bear, falls down in the snow, near Duke-street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, and is dead when he is picked up. *Lee* is shuffled away to St. Clement's Danes. If Lee died tipsy outside a public-house, Otway died half-starved within one, at the Bull, on Tower-hill. The merits of Lee and Otway might have carried them to Westminster, but their misfortunes barred the way thither. Almost as unfortunate, Settle died, after hissing in a dragon at Bartholomew Fair, a recipient of the charity of the Charter-house. Crowne died in distress, just as he hoped his 'Sir Courtly Nice,' would have placed him at his ease. Wicherley, with less excuse, died more embarrassed than Crowne, or would have done so, had he not robbed his young wife of her portion, made it over with his creditors, and left her little wherewith to bury him in the churchyard in Covent Garden. Two other poets, who passed away unencumbered by a single splendid shilling, rest in St. James's, Westminster—Tom Durfey and Bankes. Careless, easy, free, and fuddling Tate died in the sanctuary of the Mint, and St. George's, Southwark, gave him a few feet of earth; while Brady pushed his way at court to preferment, and died a comfortable pluralist and chaplain to Caroline, Princess of Wales. Farquhar, with all his wit, died a broken-hearted beggar, at the age of thirty-seven; and Dennis, who struggled forty years longer with fortune, came to the same end, utterly destitute of all but the contemptuous pity of his foes, and the insulting charity of Pope."

A word or two of lively sketching—a note of the expressive province of the tailor and valet, as cultivated by some of the notables—should we say "immortals"—of the drama of the seventeenth century, will amuse our readers—

"In his bag-wig, his black velvet dress, his sword, powder, brilliant buckles, and self-possession, Southerne charmed his company, wherever he visited, even at fourscore. He kept the even tenor of his way, owing no man anything; never allowing his nights to be the marrer of his mornings; and at six-and-eighty carrying a bright eye, a steady hand, a clear head and a warm heart, wherewith to calmly meet and make surrender of all to the Inevitable Angel.

* * *

"Southerne was not more famous for the nicety of his costume than 'little starched Johnny Crowne' was for his stiff, long cravat; or Dryden for his Norwich drugget suit, or his gayer dress in later days, when, with sword and Chadrieux wig, he paraded the Mulberry Garden with his mistress, Reeves,—one of that marvellous company of 1672, which writers with long memories used to subsequently say could never be got together again. Otway's thoughtful eye redeemed his slovenly dress and his fatness, and seemed to warrant the story of his repenting after his carousing. Lee dressed as ill as Otway, but lacked his contemplative eye, yet excelled him in fair looks, and in a peculiar luxuriance of hair."

We have long wished for such a work as Dr. Doran has just produced. So lively in style; so sparkling with anecdote; so sound in ethics; and so scholarlike in criticism. Here, indeed, we have a more perfect history than we believed practicable, of so vast and varied a progress, and so multitudinous a community, within two volumes, even of so imposing a compass as his. He has made a very delightful and masterly contribution to that store of literature which combines biography and history; and he treats it with that lively sympathy with the romantic and humorous, and that quick and true appreciation of character, which will fascinate the idle no less than the thoughtful. It would be injustice to omit mentioning in passing, how very striking and brilliant is the sketch of Edmund Kean, with which the work closes. In this Doctor Doran has given, occasionally, his own impressions of the great actor, as he declaimed "before the floats." The few analytic sentences which he thus gives us, are detailed, new, and vivid, and tantalize, moreover, by their infrequency. Doctor Doran's work closes just where his personal recollections as a playgoer begin. We are glad to learn, from a passing allusion, that he has kept a diary of his impressions. Doctor Doran has, therefore, material in the stores of his own memory, as well as in the living recollections which surround him, which qualify him to give to his own and future times a work upon the same plan as "Davies' Miscellanies," but illimitably superior. The theatric criticism of each generation owes that legacy to posterity. Without such a record, how much of the individuality of the actor's impersonation is lost. If it had not been for Davies, what a portrait of Colley Cibber, in *Shallow*, for instance, would have been wanting; and how, merely a reputation and a name some of those who now stand out in such minute handling and bright tints, even in the imperfect pages of the actor-bibliopole. Doctor Doran has a kindred field of immense variety and fertility. He has shown himself, both in apprehension and in art, well qualified for the production of such portraits as must ultimately become the authorities on which future times will form their estimate of our Glovers, Vestrises, C. Keans, W. Farrens, Mathewses, Southernes, and the rest. The criticisms of the newspaper press are, as a general rule, too hurried, and consciously too much addressed to the impression of the hour; and too multitudinous, beside, and desultory, to stand in lieu of such a work, conceived in a historic spirit, after the subsidence of stage faction, and of public enthusiasm, with the advantages alike of personal recollection and of calm judgment; with, moreover, a feeling of judicial responsibility, and a proper reverence for the marvellous art of which it must become a text-book.

Such a work we should see, with confidence, committed to the diligence, sympathy, and taste of the writer of these charming annals of "Their Majesty's Servants."

Doctor Doran's is in every sense a good and adequate book. More voluminous works may hereafter be written upon the same theme, but none, we venture to predict, which, within similar limits, will supersede, or even disturb it.

MY AUNT MARGARET'S ADVENTURE.

CHAPTER I.

AUNT MARGARET AT HOME.

My Aunt Margaret was what is termed a clever woman—that is to say, she was keen and resolute, prompt and active, and difficult to overreach in matters of money or business. Of the former she was, people said, a little too fond. At all events she hated waste, and lived frugally on a dietary which leaned much upon tea and eggs, and sometimes omitted dinner altogether. But though light, her housekeeping was neither beggarly nor altogether uncomfortable.

Aunt Margaret, as I remember her—dear me, how many years ago!—was rather tall, if anything, and decidedly slim and erect, with a countenance which, though shrewd and energetic, had yet something kindly in it. Her features were small and nicely turned, and one could quite suppose that she might have been a pretty girl once on a time.

She held herself well, and stepped with a good, firm tred, and lightly withal. Hers was a rustic life, somewhat lonely, in a three-storied house, with three rooms on a floor, and a gable at front—steep-roofed and tiled, and with a great growth of jessamine and woodbine about the porch and the windows. Half a dozen tall, dark elms made a comfortable shadow about the house; and a white paling in front enclosed, by the road-side, the little flower garden, with an old mulberry tree in the centre.

In the rear was a lock-up yard with coach-house and stable, and a comfortable room in which old Tom Clinton slept with a blunderbuss and back-sword in case of robbers. On week-days Aunt Margaret dressed very plainly—stuff in winter, cotton in summer; but on Sundays she went to church in thick old satins or ancient brocades, so stiff that the squire's lady across the aisle used to talk of them covetously for days after, and wonder why such things were not to be had now-a-days.

Aunt Margaret was always particularly neat. She used to carry her keys in an old-fashioned way, from a ribbon by her side, a neat little pincushion, her scissors, and I forget what else. It was the tradition of that chatelaine which I saw revived long after poor Aunt Margaret had gone to her rest. She had long and very pretty hands—her years considered; and, in fact, the only thing I remember decidedly against her was her enamelled box of rappee, and the habit to which it ministered.

Her prime-minister was Winnifred Dobbs—fattish, rosy, ancient. Time *had* thinned her flowing hair, and bleached it somewhat; but she smiled largely, and was good-humoured; although not very quick, was steady and sure, and chatted volubly, though not always much to the purpose; and Aunt Margaret gave her her tea in the drawing-room, which was an excuse for keeping her there for the rest of the evening; and so Aunt Margaret was not quite so lonely as she might have been.

There was a young and stumpy girl beside, who washed, and did nearly everything, and must have found these young days rather dull. To her the view of the road from the kitchen window was a resource, and the occasional calls of the baker, butcher, and dairyman were precious. She talked and laughed with herself; she sang a great deal in the scullery, and joked with the cat in the kitchen.

Among Aunt Margaret's sources of revenue was her moiety of what she called the Winderbrooke property. Everybody, of course, knows the old town of Winderbrooke. Three houses in the main street belonged to her and her sister. Of these, for convenience, they made a division, the best they could. Aunt Margaret had for her share a tobacconist and half a tailor. The latter was punctual; but the tobacconist owed a whole year's rent, and was already some way in his third half-year. His letters were highly unsatisfactory. The tailor's answers to her inquiries about his defaulting neighbour were reserved and evasive. But that she had a wise terror of law and lawyers my Aunt would have retained an attorney forthwith.

"I'm not suprised, Winnie," said my Aunt, snuffing her candle, as she and her confidential handmaid sat by the fire, in her diminutive drawing-room, at their tea; "not the least. Did you ever know one man tell of another when a woman was concerned? John Pendle has been my tenant eleven years and knows all about that roguish snuff-man; but he won't tell me one iota about him. Not that Browning is anything on earth to him. I suppose he doesn't care if Browning was hanged; but simply Browning is a man, and *I* a *woman.* That's it, Winnie—that's *all*—*I*'m to be robbed, and no one to prevent it. A conspiracy I call it. I tell you, Winnie, I never knew one man prevent another's robbing a woman, except when he hoped to rob her himself."

Honest Dobbs's fat face and round eyes looked distressed over her teacup at her mistress, while she discoursed; and she made answer only by that expressive but unspellable tick-tick-tick-ing made by the tip of the tongue at the back of the teeth.

"And rob me they would, Winnie, if I were half such a fool as *you*, for instance. But I'll show them there *are* women who do know something of business."

And she nodded mysteriously, but briskly, on her maid with a side-glance of her dark eye.

"I mean to start to-morrow morning, after breakfast, at eight o'clock. You come with me, Winnie, and we'll sleep to-morrow night at Winderbrooke, and *that*, I think, will surprise them."

CHAPTER II.

MY AUNT MARGARET ON THE ROAD.

OLD Tom Teukesbury, from the "Bull," was not at the little wicket of Aunt Margaret's habitation until sixteen minutes past nine.

As Tom drew up, driving a one-horse covered vehicle, the name and fashion of which have long passed away, my Aunt, fully equipped was standing on the step of her open door, with her watch in her right hand, the dial of which she presented grimly at Tom, perched in the distance on the box.

Tom's lean, mulberry-coloured face, sharp nose, and cold gray eyes winced not at the taunt.

"It's easy a showin' a watch. I'd like to know where the 'oss is to come from, if maister sends the grey to Huntley, and Jack can't go in harness noways; and here's the bay can't go neither without a brushing boot; and I'm to go down to Hoxton to borrow one of Squire; there's a raw there as big as my hand—you don't want her to founder 'twixt this and Muckleston, I'm sure; and you wouldn't be so hard on the brute, to drive her without one—and that's why, ma'am."

Tom's way with women when he was late, was to complicate the case, with an issue on farriery, which soon shuts them up.

So Winnifred got in with a basket of edibles, and the carpet-bag on the seat beside my Aunt, who entered the vehicle severely.

It was a journey of nearly forty miles, by cross-roads, to Winderbrooke. All geographers well know the range of hills that lie between Hoxton and that town. The landscape is charming—the air invigorating. But the pull up the steep road that scales the side of the hill, is severe. The bay-mare showed signs of her soft feeding. She was hirsute, clumsy, and sudorous. She had a paunch, and now and then a cavernous cough.

The progress was, therefore, slow; and the ladies, every here and there, up particularly stiff bits, were obliged to get out and walk, which, although my Aunt might not mind it much, distressed good Winnifred Dobbs, who was in no condition for executing an excelsior movement on foot.

Near the summit of the hill the ladies waxed hungry; so, it was presumed, did the mare. The party halted; the nosebag was applied; the basket was opened; Tom had a couple of clumsy sandwiches; the ladies partook; and the bay mare enjoyed her repast with that pleasant crisp crunching, which agreeably suggests good grinders and a good grist.

There was still a little pull before reaching the crown of the hill. Winnifred could walk no more; but my Aunt trod nimbly up the ascent, and on reaching the summit, made a halt, and, like an invading general, viewed with an eye at once curious and commanding, the country that lay beneath.

She was looking for Winderbrooke close by the foot of the hill.

"Where's the town?" demanded my Aunt.

"Wat toon, ma'am?" inquired Tom.

"Winderbrooke, to be sure."

"Well, Winderbrooke will be there."

Tom was pistoling Winderbrooke with his whip.

"Where?"

"You see the steeple there?"

"Ay."

"Well, that isn't it."

"No?"

"Now, ye'll see a bit of a rock or a hillock atop o' that hill."

"That hill—well?"

"Now, follow that line on past that whitish thing ye see."

"You don't mean on that remote plain? Why, man, that's the horizon."

"Well, it's beyond that a little bit, over the rising ground that will be jest there; and folks say, on a clear day, you may see the smoke o' the toon over it, though I never did.

There was a pause, and my Aunt looked stern and black toward the remote objects which he indicated and neither could see, and then she looked back over her shoulder in the direction of home. I can't say what was passing in her mind; but she looked forward again, and with an angry side-glance at Tom, she said—

"Why, it's a perfect *journey!*"

There was another pause, and she said with a dry abruptness, "Let me in, please;" and in the same defiant tone, "Go *on!*"

And she drew up the window with a sharp clang in Tom's face.

She sat stiff and silent, and sniffed as she looked sternly through the window, and answered Winnifred Dobbs, who was under the same comfortable delusion about the vicinity of Winderbrooke, sharply and suddenly, when she asked how far they still had to go, before reaching that resting place.

"Fifty miles, and another range of mountains."

CHAPTER III.

THE MOON RISES.

Down hill was pleasanter, and the bay mare did wonders, and my Aunt, who was not more unjust than the rest of her sex, soon forgave her companion, and talked affably enough with fat old Winnie Dobbs.

About two miles beyond the foot of the hill, in a pretty hollow, lies the pleasant little town of Dramworth, with old red brick gables and many tall poplars, where at the small inn, the party changed horses.

It was not far from three o'clock in the afternoon when they arrived there. One horse they found in the inn stable, but nothing less than a post-chaise, and no driver on the premises, men and vehicles being away on other travels.

Tom being well known there, and fortunately being well esteemed, there was no great hesitation in trusting the horse in his hands. So the bay mare took her place in the stable, and the Dramworth steed was put to in her place. It was a long drive—three-and-twenty miles—still to Winderbrooke, and the horse and the roads indifferent. The season was pretty well on in the autumn, and the evenings were not so long as they had been at midsummer, and as it was some time past three when they started, Tom could not undertake to reach their destination before nightfall.

From Dramworth to Winderbrooke was by no means so familiar a route to Tom Teukesbury as the road they had travelled hitherto. He conferred, however, with mine host under the porch, and gathered in brief hints and notes, the landmarks of his journey, and resumed the whip and reins with a serious but tolerably confident countenance.

Tom being under promise to spare the horse, drove drowsily. It is a very pretty country, though but thinly inhabited. The sun was by this time at the verge of those low hills that lie to the westward. They had just crossed a narrow old bridge over a little stream, and there was an ascent at the other side, which their horse refused to mount until the ladies had descended. In fact he was an unsatisfactory brute and, Tom feared, had been out that morning.

My Aunt and Winnifred got down and trudged on, this time in front of the vehicle, which came tinkling up the slope, in the slanting light, with Tom at the horse's head. In this lonely region a solitary little boy came over a stile by the roadside, and looking back, Aunt Margaret saw Tom at a standstill, conversing with the urchin, and pointing in various directions in illustration of his discourse, or his questioning.

"Well, Tom, what does he say? How far is it to Winderbrooke?"

"He is a stoopid, that boy, and knows nout—no more than that post, ma'am—he doan't."

I think Tom was uneasy by this time, for he did not know the country. He was gaping about him vainly for a sight of a human being, and standing up in the "dickey" and beckoning with his whip whenever he fancied he saw one. But each in succession turned out to be a horse or a goat, or a post. Sometimes he got up a brisk trot, and sometimes subsided almost to a walk, as his doubts or his hopes prevailed. But though he affected in replying to my Aunt's queries through the front window, a confidence as to their whereabouts, and promised the early appearance of certain landmarks which he named, yet I think by this time honest Tom was strongly of opinion that he had lost his way.

By the time the sun went down they had got upon a wild moorland with patches of stunted old wood, and heathy undulations, and distant boundaries of low hills, crowned irregularly with trees.

"Get on a little faster, please; I don't like being out in the dark," urged my Aunt who, as a spinster, and in charge beside of Winnie Dobbs, felt her responsibilities duly.

Tom muttered to himself, and got into a trot which, however, soon abated. Twilight was deepening and a round harvest moon soon began to shine solemnly over the broad and solitary landscape.

"How many miles now, Tom?" asked my Aunt sharply from the window.

"It'll be about five from Winderbrooke, ma'am."

"And what's this place?"

"Well, it's the moor, I suppose."

"I'd like a glass of water. Is there a house near?"

"We'll be soon at the cross-mills—round that bit of a clump o' trees there."

But when they passed the clump there was neither river nor mills, and Tom stood up uneasily in the dickey, and made a dreary survey.

"Are we at the mills, Tom?"

"Not yet a bit, ma'am—I'm a looking if there's a house near."

But there was no friendly red twinkle from cottage window, and Tom, with his two maidens in charge, was growing very uncomfortable.

CHAPTER IV.

PERTURBATION.

THEY drove very slowly. Tom was groping in a geographical chaos, and paused every now and then. My Aunt inquired angrily, demanding the production of the cross-mills. Tom asked ten minutes, and half a mile more, and promised the *profert;* but after half an hour's driving, with no result, my Aunt grew extremely frightened and exasperated, and Tom sulkily admitted that he had his doubts as to their topographical position.

Tom halted, and stood up in the dickey, as before. My Aunt Margaret descended, and looking at the moonlit prospect from the bank by the roadside, harangued the troubled driver in strong and shrill language; and Winnie, whose grief was more sedentary, sat in the vehicle, and spoke not, but stared through the window, with a fat and fatigued sadness, in vague apprehension.

There were plenty of old stories of highwaymen afloat through their scared fancies; and here was a lonely heath—two helpless maidens also, with a trunk, a basket of "prog," and four pounds seven and sixpence in a purse, and a driver without small or back-sword, and no pistols!

"We'll, sure, get on the London road in two miles more or less, and then we're all right," said Tom.

"London, fiddle! It's my belief, Thomas Teukesbury, you have not the faintest idea where we are; you haven't, sir, no more than myself."

"There isn't a light nor a house. D——n the place!" retorted Tom, bitterly.

"Don't curse—we're bad enough. No impiety, please. *You* should command yourself, I think, if *I* do, while we are in this helpless and utterly unprotected situation."

"There's a man coming," said Tom, hopefully.

"Good gracious!" cried my Aunt.

"No, there aint," said Tom, dejectedly.

"Heaven be praised!" said my Aunt, with a gasp. "I look on it, sir, we're in danger here on this dreadful moor, to which *you*, sir, have brought us. What a shame, Thomas, to pretend you knew the way! Winnie, Winnie Dobbs, we're *lost*—lost on a heath! Tom has lost us!"

Winnie's fat, forlorn face filled the back window of the vehicle.

"Lost on a heath, Winnie, in the middle of the night!"

"What'll we best do, ma'am?" imploringly asked Winnie, who was accustomed to derive her stock of wisdom in all emergencies from my Aunt Margaret's inspiration.

"Ask Thomas Teukesbury up there—he's our guide. He brought us here, though he does not seem to know a way out. Ask him. *I* don't know, no more than the man in the moon there."

"I dessay we're all right enough, after all," said Tom, "only I don't know it by this light. Will you get in, ma'am, and we'll git on a bit, and we'll, sure, light on a hinn or a public afore long."

Well, she did get in. The horse was unmistakably fatigued, with a disposition to draw up every now and then, by an old tree, or under a steep bank, or sometimes without any special landmark to invite.

Tom got down, and walked by the brute's dejected head; and my Aunt, who had given up the sarcastic and ironical mood as her alarms deepened, scolded him occasionally from the front window. As the back of his head and shoulders were presented, Tom walked on, not caring to turn about to reply, but, I am afraid, making some disrespectful remarks in the dark.

In fact, the poor horse, who, if he had but understood and spoken our language, could, probably, have saved them and himself a world of trouble, was so evidently done up that Tom insisted he must have his oats, and accordingly, he partook of that refreshment in a nose-bag. Here was another delay. My Aunt's watch had been frequently consulted, by the moonlight, during that anxious journey. It was now out again. The night was a little sharp, too; and the whole party, who had made no provision for such a climate and such hours, were rather cold. You may be sure my Aunt's temper was not growing more agreeable.

There was just the alternative of a bivouac where they stood, or following, on chance, the road they had been pursuing. My Aunt adopted the latter. Affairs had grown so serious that she now never removed her face from the little front window, through which she looked ahead, with hope deferred, and a sick heart.

She had been so often deceived by marly banks and thickets, that it was not until they had almost reached it, to her inexpressible relief, she plainly saw the whitewashed front of a low, two-storied public, standing back from the road a few yards, and snugly sheltered among some thick and stunted trees.

My Aunt held the reins through the window, and Tom got down and summoned mine host. A red streak of candle-light shot out through the door of the pot-house, and there was a parley which she could not hear.

CHAPTER V.

"THE GOOD WOMAN."

Tom returned slowly. My Aunt's heart sank.

"Well?"

"Only two rooms, ma'am, and lofts above, and the house full o' tipsy colliers, dancing. But there's an inn, called "The Good Woman," only half a mile on, and lots o' room."

My Aunt breathed a sigh of relief, and was silently thankful. Then she repeated the news to Winnie, who joined in the jubilation.

About ten minutes more brought them, after a slight ascent, on a sudden, to a hollow, expanding to an amphitheatrical plain, encompassed by wooded, rising grounds, and near the centre of which rose two abrupt and oddly-shaped hillocks, like islands from a lake, and a very large pond from under a thick screen of trees, and the clustered gables and chimneys of "The Good Woman" shone mistily in the moonlight.

They drew up before the door of the inn. Old-fashioned and weather-stained it looked in the faint beams. The door was closed—it was past ten o'clock—but a glimmer of candle or fire-light shone through the shutter chink at the right. My Aunt did not wait. There was no need to hold the reins of the timid horse, who coughed, snorted, and shook himself, with his nose near the ground.

My Aunt Margaret ran up the three broad steps, the dingy "Good Woman," without a head, sarcastically swinging between the sign-posts at her left.

With the carpet-bag in one hand, she hammered lustily at the knocker with the other. Tom, a little in the rear, with one foot on the steps, rested the trunk on his knee; and Winnie, with the basket of "prog" on her arm, stood dejectedly beside him.

There was some delay about opening the door, and when it was done, it was with a chain across, and a woman, with a coarse voice, and strong Irish accent, asked, not pleasantly, who was there.

"Travellers," said my Aunt, "who have been led astray by the driver."

"Where are yez from?"

"From Dramworth to Winderbrooke."

"From Dhramworth to Windherbrooke! an' he dhruv yez here! How many iv yez is in it?"

"Two ladies, a horse, a vehicle, and

the driver." Tom, the culprit, was degraded, and my Aunt placed him after the vehicle.

The maid of the inn, with high-cheek bones, and a determined countenance, was looking over the chain.

"Did yez come through the village, or over the moor?"

"Over the moor, I suppose; from that direction," answered my Aunt.

"And why didn't yez stop at "The Cat and Fiddle?"

"You mean the small ale-house near this. It was full of inebriated men," answered Aunt Margaret, with dignity.

"Well, *you* may come in, ma'am, and the leedy that's widge ye; but we can't accommo*date* yer man, and he must only take the horse an' carriage back to 'The Cat an' Fiddle,' an' if that'll answer, yez may come in; if not, yez must all go on, for we won't let a man in after ten o'clock."

My Aunt expostulated, but the portress was inexorable.

"We won't let a *man* in after ten o'clock for Saint Paythen, and that's the holy all iv it," she answered, firmly.

So, my Aunt submitted, and softening at the parting, gave Tom some shillings on account, and wished him good-night; and when he had got upon the box, and started afresh for "The Cat and Fiddle," and had made some way in his return, the door was shut in the faces of the spinsters, who stood, with their modest luggage, upon the steps, in the moonlight. The chain was withdrawn, and the hall of "The Good Woman" stood open to receive them.

I don't know whether my Aunt had read "Ferdinand Count Fathom," or ever seen the "Bleeding Nun" performed on any stage; but if she had I venture to say she was reminded of both before morning.

The woman with high-cheek bones, and somewhat forbidding face, stood before them on their entrance, with a brass candlestick raised in her hand, so that the light fell from above her head on the faces of the guests. She had allowed them without a helping hand to pull in their luggage, and was now making a steady and somewhat scowling scrutiny of my Aunt and Winnie.

"And yez come from Windberbrooke?" she said, after an interval, with a jealous glance still upon them.

My Aunt nodded.

"Yer mighty tall, the two o' yez, I'm thinkin'" (another pause.) "Will I help yez off widge yer cloaks?"

My Aunt would have probably been tart enough upon this uncivil damsel, had it not been that her attention was a little called off by the sound of female lamentation indistinctly audible from a chamber near the hall.

She proceeded to remove their mantles, eyeing them, at the same time, with a surly sort of curiosity.

"We are cold, my good woman; we can sit for a while by the kitchen fire," said my Aunt, recollecting herself.

"The kitchen's all through other wid the sutt that's tumbled down the chimbley; bud I'll light yez a bit o' fire in a brace o' shakes in your bedroom. Is it dinner yez'ill be wanting?"

"Tea, please," said my Aunt, "and eggs."

"Lend a hand i' ye plase, Missess, wid them things," said she to Winnie, whom, with the quick instinct of her kind, she discovered to be the subordinate.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WHITE CHAMBER.

A FAT slatternly woman, by no means young, with a face swollen and red with weeping, pushed open a side door, and standing behind the portress, gaped on them, and asked—

"Is it them, Nell?"

"Arra, ma'am, can't ye keep quite. No it isn't no one, but here's two leedies ye see, that wants a bed an' a fire, and a cup o' tay in the white room. Come along i' ye plase, my leedy."

And in an' aside, as she passed, my Aunt heard her say, close in the blubbered face of the fat woman—

"Arrah, ma'am, dear, will ye get in out o' that, an' shut the doore."

The stout woman complied; and as they mounted the broad stairs, they again heard the sounds of crying.

This certainly savoured in no wise of the warm welcome for which inns are famous. The mansion, too, was old, wainscoted, and palpably altogether too large for its business. They met Boots coming down the stairs with a dingy kitchen candle and a hammer in his hand; a pallid fellow, with the sort of inquiring hang-dog look that seemed to belong to the staff of "The Good Woman." He stood close by the wall in the corner of the lobby as they passed by, and did not offer to carry up the trunk.

"Bring a guvvaul o' wudd, will ye, Barney, jewel, to the white room?" said the handmaid over her shoulder.

My Aunt and Winnie followed her to the head of the stairs, where she placed the trunk, and this slight circumstance I mention, because it was immediately connected with my Aunt's adventure, and she took a coal-scuttle instead, and conducting by two turns into a long wainscoted gallery, she opened a door on the right, and they entered a large square room, with a recess near one angle, two tall narrow windows, with white curtains rather yellow, and one very capacious bed, with curtains of the same. There was a skimpy bit of carpet near the hearth, and very scant and plain furniture.

The wood having arrived, Nell made a good fire, placed the deal table and two chairs near it, lighted a large mould of four to the pound, such as Molly Dumpling sported on the night of her dreadful adventure with William Gardner, and altogether the room began to put on its cheeriest looks. And when the tea-things, eggs, and buttered toast arrived, my Aunt and Winnie being well warmed by this time, sat down with their feet on the fender, the one mollified and the other consoled.

After tea, my Aunt, who was a fidgetty person, made a tour of the room, and a scrutiny of the open cupboard and drawers, but she found nothing, except an old black glove for the left hand, in one of the drawers..

When this was over she sat by the fire again, and speculated for Winnie's instruction upon their geographical probabilities. But Winnie was growing sleepy.

"A double-bedded room would have been more *comme il faut;* but it is plainly a poor place, and after all the bed is unusually large," thought my Aunt.

And so, indeed, it was, extraordinarily large, and of an old-fashioned construction.

My Aunt, who was of an active inquiring genius, opened a bit of one of the shutters and peeped out. It showed a view of the inn yard. The side next her had been formed by a wing of the house; but that now stood up a gaunt roofless wall, with the broad moon shining through its sashless windows. On the left was a row of tall and dingy stables and offices, and opposite, another ruined building, a shed, and a tall arched gate. The pavement was grass-grown and rutty, and the whole thing looked awfully seedy, and not the less gloomy for some great trees that darkly overhung the buildings from the outside.

Having made her survey, my Aunt would have closed the shutter, but that she saw a man walk lazily from the side beneath her, his hands in his pockets, across the yard, casting an undulating and misshapen shadow over the uneven pavement.

When he reached the gate at the other side, he took a key from his pocket, and unlocked a wicket in it, and setting his foot on the plank beneath, leaned his elbow on the side, and lazily looked out, as if on the watch for somebody. A huge dog came pattering out of a kennel in the shadow, and placing his great head by the man's leg, sniffed gloomily into the darkness.

"Are ye expectin' any friends, ma'am?" asked Nell's coarse voice over my Aunt's shoulder, so sharply and suddenly that the start brought the blood to her thin cheeks.

"Not very likely to see friends here," replied my Aunt, very tartly. "What do you mean, woman, by talking that way over my shoulder?"

The grim chambermaid by this time had seen the man, and was eyeing him under her projecting and somewhat shrewish brows.

"An' ye come from Hoxton?" she said rather slowly and sharply.

"I told you so, woman."

"It wasn't from Westherton, ye're sure?"

"I've told you where we came from, though it is no business of yours. I never heard of Westerton."

My Aunt added this a little emphatically, owing to an undefined feeling that a suspicion of having come from Westerton was likely in some mysterious way to prejudice her.

The maid replied nothing, but said a little gruffly,

"By your lave, ma'am;" and pushing by her, she closed the shutters, and drew a great wooden sliding bolt across with a jerk.

My Aunt was so taken by surprise that she lost her time for retorting with effect, as she would have done, but she was so incensed, that from the fireplace she could not forbear saying,

"I think you a most impertinent woman."

To which the maid made no reply, but turned down the bed-clothes, and arranged the curtains; and gathering together the tea equipage, carried the tray away, shutting the door.

CHAPTER VII.

AN ACCIDENT BEFALLS THE CANDLE.

My Aunt Margaret stood for a while with her back to the fire, very erect, and her nose in air, sniffing defiantly toward the door through which that "most impertinent woman" had disappeared. Winnie was nodding profoundly in her chair by the fire. My Aunt with a toss of her head walked off again to the window, jerked back the bolt, and looked once more into the stable-yard.

She saw Nell at the wicket-door, talking and gesticulating roughly with the man who had taken his stand there with the dog. Nell seemed to prevail with him, for he whistled back the dog, who had gone out, and locking the door again, he returned across the yard with Nell, who continued talking volubly as they walked side by side, and pointed up at my Aunt's window. On seeing the shutter again open and my Aunt's head and shoulders revealed against the light, both maid and man stopped in amaze, and silently gazed at her for some moments. I dare say, as my Aunt observed the evident impression produced upon those mysterious persons, she regretted inwardly the act of defiance which had removed the bolt and replaced her at the window. The woman walked into the house without speaking; the man called the dog, and strolled away towards the stable.

My Aunt closed the shutter, drew the bolt, and coming again to the fire, shook Winnie up from her sleep, and ordered her to say her prayers and get to bed.

These orders were soon complied with, and honest Winnie slept the sleep of a good conscience and a good digestion, sweetened by fatigue, while her mistress, who was cursed with an active mind, sat by the fire, with a well-snuffed candle, and conned over her correspondence and her figures, and prepared for the critical interview with the defaulting tobacconist next day. Then she fell into a reverie with her foot on the fender. I don't think she dozed; but the fire grew low, and the snuff of the candle waxed long and heavy at top like a fungus, and the room was tenebrose and silent, as indeed was the house, for by this time it was very late.

After a while, my Aunt fancied she heard some one approaching her chamber door very softly. It was the stealthy creaking of the boards that warned her; she could not hear the tread of the foot. She held her breath, sitting straight upon her chair, and gazing at the door with such faint light as her unsnuffed taper afforded her; and I dare say she looked extremely frightened.

She heard some one breathing close outside the door, then a hand softly laid on the door-handle; the door gently opened, and the face of the woman of the high cheek bones, pale and lowering, looked in. Her ill-omened stare encountered my Aunt's gaze, and each was perhaps unpleasantly surprised.

Both looked on, pale enough, for some time without speaking. At last my Aunt stood up and said sharply—

"What's your business here, pray?"

"'Tis late to be burnin' candle and fire, missess—half-past twelve, no less," said the maid with cool asperity. "We're an airly house, ma'am, here, and keeps dacent hours. Mebbe it's what ye'd like supper—there's cowld corn-beef and bacon," she added after a pause.

"Not any, thanks; had I wished supper, I would have rung for it," said Aunt Margaret, loftily.

"Thrue for you, missess, only there's no bell," answered the woman, coolly.

"More shame for you," retorted my Aunt, with a little flush, glancing along the walls innocent of bell-rope, for this "most impertinent woman" made her feel a little small.

"I seen you lookin' out again, ma'am, through the windy, I don't know after who."

The *aplomb* of this woman's attacks deprived my Aunt of breath and presence of mind, and she was amazed afterwards at the perplexed sort of patience with which she submitted to her impertinence.

"Yes; I looked out of the window."

"We would not like people stoppin' here that had friends outside," said the woman, with a searching glance and a sulky wag of her head.

"I don't know what you mean, woman."

"Oh, ho! thankee—I know very well what I mane—an' mebbe you're not quite sich a fool yourself but what you can make a guess. At any rate it is not a lady's part to be furretin' about the room, an' pimpin' an' spyin', ma'am."

"Leave the room, please," exclaimed my Aunt.

"An' mebbe signin' and beckonin' out o' the windies be night. Oh, ho! thankee—I know well enough what belongs to a lady."

"I repeat, woman, you had better leave the room."

"*Woman*, yourself!—I'm not goin' to be woman'd be you—an' the big lump iv a woman ye brought widge ye. Who's that? eh?"

"My housekeeper," replied my Aunt, with a fierce dignity.

"An' a strappin' ould one she is," retorted the woman, with a hoarse sneer. She was turning over Winnie's clothes, which lay on a chair.

"Your conduct is intolerable. I shall see the proprietor in the morning."

"An' welcome!" said the woman, coolly. "You closed the shutters again, I suppose?" and she walked round the bed to the window, from which my Aunt had made her observations.

I do believe that, if she was enraged, Aunt Margaret was also the least bit in the world cowed by this woman. But observing a little trembling in the bed-curtains, to the far side of which her ugly visiter had passed, my Aunt made a quick step to the side of the bed next her, and drawing the curtain, saw this unpleasant woman at the opposite side with the bed-clothes raised in her hand from Winnie's feet and ankles, which she was inspecting.

"Big feet!" Where's her boots, ma'am?" said the maid across the bed, eyeing my Aunt aslant, and replacing the bed-clothes.

"Boots or shoes, on the floor by the fire, and I wish you'd begone."

"I'll take your own, too, ma'am," answered she.

"Well, yes; that is, I'll leave them outside the door."

"As ye plaze; only get to yer bed, at wonst—it's all hours;" and without more preparation, she chucked my Aunt's mould candle from its socket into the fire, where, lying on its side it blazed up merrily.

"What do you mean? How dare you, huzzy! Fetch a candle this moment."

"Arra go to yer bed, woman, while ye have light, will ye?" and with these words the attendant withdrew, shutting the door with a clap.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF A FIGURE SEEN BY MY AUNT.

My Aunt opened the door, very angry. She was about to walk down stairs to insist on trying the delinquent by court-martial before the "Proprietor;" but she recollected that he was probably in his bed and asleep by this time. She contented herself, therefore, by calling after her.

"Rely on it, I'll complain in the morning—so sure as I live."

And so she shut the door, and the candle making a glorious blaze in the grate my Aunt thought the chambermaid's advice worth following, and did get into her bed while there was light.

I dare say her collision with the chambermaid cost her more than twenty minutes' sleep. When her anger subsided there remained a different sort of uneasiness, for there was something ill-omened and menacing in the unintelligible ways of this inn and its people. My Aunt Margaret, however, was really tired, and eventually fell into a slumber, deep and dreamless, from which she awakened with a start.

She fancied that she had been disturbed by a sound as of some heavy weight pulled along the floor close to the room in which she slept. The sound had ceased before she was fully awake; but it left her with a most disagreeable sensation of fear and uncertainty, for, undefinably, it was connected in her mind with the idea of mischief designed to herself.

All of a sudden she remembered her trunk, left at the head of the staircase, and the idea rushed upon her, "They are stealing my trunk!" The sound resembled the rumble of it along the floor.

My Aunt had a keen sense of property, and was not wanting in pluck. She jumped out of bed, opened her door softly, and listened. But everything was perfectly quiet.

"It was in order to confine me to my room that that odious woman deprived me of my candle," thought my Aunt, although even if she had had it at her bedside she could not have lighted it, for the fire had gone quite out.

She listened, but there was nothing stirring; and, in extreme *déshabille*, as she was, my Aunt, full of anxieties, crept out on the lobby, and made her way through the passages to the stair-head.

There stood the old hair trunk on its end, with its rows of dim brass nails, plain enough in the faint light from the lobby window. My Aunt was relieved. She would have been very glad to pull it into her room; but the distance was considerable, and the noise would have brought the people about her, and she was in no state to receive company.

Having stood affectionately and anxiously by the friendly trunk for a minute or two, irresolute, she began to find it too cold to stay longer; so, with an easier mind, she groped her way back again.

It was easier to find the lobby than to discover in the dark her own bedroom door. She groped along the passages; she had counted the steps, but now was not quite sure whether it was thirty-five, or *forty*-five; she stopped now and then to listen in her groping return, and began to grow rather confused; and wished, as active-minded persons not unfrequently do, that she had remained quietly as she was.

In fact, she was precisely in the situation to lose her way, and step into a wrong bedroom, and was extremely uncomfortable in mind and cold in body; and very nervous beside, lest any one should chance to come that way with a candle, and discover the nakedness of the land.

In this state my Aunt's deliberations were of the very fussiest sort, and her exertions great; but I doubt if she could have recovered her room, at least at the first venture, without light. Light, however, did come, and this was the manner of its arrival.

On a sudden a door opened below stairs—near the foot of the staircase it must have been, she heard so clearly; and voices, before inaudible, now reached her ear.

A female was weeping loudly, and uttering broken sentences through her sobs.

"They've killed him—he's murdered—they've murdered him!" and similar ejaculations came rapidly tumbling one over the other in her ululation.

"Arra, ma'am, go back again, and stay where ye wor. We'll be even wid them yet, for it is murdher, the villians!" said a voice, which my Aunt had no difficulty in recognising as that of the Irish chambermaid. "Bud don't be rousin' the people—it must be done quiet."

There was more sobbing, and more talk, and the weeping female gave way, and was again shut into her room, and a gleam of an approaching candle sent an angular shadow on the ceiling at the end of the passage in which my Aunt stood.

Extremely frightened, she crouched

down close to the ground, and the forbidding-looking woman, with the high cheek bones, walked stealthily in from the stair-head passage, and stood, as pale as death, with her shoes off, and a candle in her hand, listening, as it seemed, at the far end of the gallery. She looked over her shoulder, and said, in a hard whisper—

"Stop there, wid their heavy shoes."

She had a hammer in her hand, and looked unspeakably repulsive in her pallor. She lifted the candle above her head and listened. My Aunt was staring full at her from her place of semi-concealment, in a recess of one of the doors, with her face close to the ground.

If the woman saw her, she had presence of mind to make no sign; but with the hand in which the hammer was, she drew her dress up a little to enable her to step more freely, and, with a light, soft tread, passed across the entrance of the gallery.

CHAPTER IX.

THE FUNERAL VISITATION.

My Aunt was impressed with the most dismal and terrific ideas of what was going forward. She was quite unnerved. She saw, sometimes the shadow of this woman, and sometimes the full light of the candle, still thrown upon the floor and walls at the end of the lobby, and dared not move.

Quickly the woman returned. She had now the hammer under the arm which bore the candlestick, and whispered—

"Barney!"

Then she raised in her other hand a long, rather slender, steel blade, as it appeared to my aunt, quite straight, and whispered—

"That's the thing—betther nor the hammer; there's no one awake but herself—for the life o' ye, make no noise."

She was crossing the far end of the passage as she said this, and she and the light of her candle quickly disappeared.

The last gleam threw the shadow of a pair of shoes from outside a bedroom door, along the floor, towards my Aunt. The door was next that in which she was crouched, and was a little open. She was now sure that she had discovered her room.

The moment the light had quite disappeared, she entered, and shut the door softly, and groped her way to the bed, and got in at her own side; and, being very cold, lay close to her companion for warmth. My Aunt envied Winnie her sound sleep. She vainly tried to compose herself, wildly conjecturing about unknown horrors, and longing for morning, and an escape from this suspected and mysterious house.

She was miserably cold, too. The night was sharp, and the fire long out. The bed-clothes were insufficient, and Winnie also as cold as stone.

My Aunt had been in this state—freezing and listening, and awfully frightened for some ten minutes, perhaps, when she distinctly heard breathing near her door, and the muffled tread of shoeless feet, and then a whispering.

The door opened, and two men came in, carrying a coffin, on the lid of which a kitchen candle was burning dimly; and the ugly woman, Nell, between whom and my Aunt there had grown up, so fast, an unaccountable antipathy, followed, carrying in her hand the steel instrument which Aunt Margaret had observed before with so unpleasant a suspicion, and which was, in fact, a turn-screw.

The whole of this funereal pageant approached my Aunt like the imagery of a dream. The men paused for a moment, while the woman placed the candle on a chest of drawers, and slid the coffin-lid off, leaning it against the wall. They drew near; and as they laid their awful burthen lengthways on the bed by her side, one of the two men said—

"I'll go to the feet, and do you go to the head."

Upon this my Aunt, almost beside herself with terror, bounced up in the bed; and, instead of despatching her, as she had expected, with a horrid roar and a screech, the men and woman fled from the room, and along the passage, leaving the coffin on the bed beside her.

"Winnie, Winnie—what is it?" cried my Aunt.

But no Winnie was there. In her stead lay a dead man, with a whitefringed cap on, and a black, stubbed beard, the growth of some three or four days, and a little line of the white of one eye shining between its half-closed lids.

It was now my Aunt's turn, and with a loud yell, and overturning the coffin, she jumped out of the bed, and ran screaming along the gallery, where she fell, and fainted on the floor.

When she came to herself, she was in her own room and bed once more, with Winnie beside her; and she exclaimed, so soon as recollection quite returned—

"Oh, save me, Winnie, save me."

"You're quite safe, ma'am, dear."

"Where are we?"

"In the inn, ma'am."

"Bolt the door, Winnie; bolt the door, and lock it—they're all murderers."

"Drink some water, ma'am."

"Lock the door, you fool! We shall be murdered."

"The maid was here, ma'am, very sorry you were so frightened; but you went into the wrong room, and they could not help it."

CHAPTER X.

HOW IT ALL HAPPENED.

GRADUALLY the facts came to light, though not fully for a long time afterward.

"The Good Woman" was one of those inns pleasantly known to our great-grandfathers. The old London road had run by its steps; and the wheels of old stage-coaches, post-chaises, and waggons, had dustied its windows once. But, unluckily for "The Good Woman," she stood upon the apex of a curve of that great channel of traffic which modern reform and a county presentment cut off; and the London road, henceforward running in a straight line from Dwiddleston to Huxbridge—fifteen miles—leaves "The Good Woman" full three miles on one side.

With the opening of the new line, and the "Crottworthy Arms," the halcyon days of the old inn ended. Its gabled frontage, steep roofs, and capacious premises—a world too wide for its shrunk business—fell gradually to decay. The old proprietor retired to his farm in Cheshire; and his nephew succeeded, got desperately into debt, was sued in all directions, and judgments wielded by exasperated creditors glimmered terribly through the storm, threatening to dash him to pieces. At this crisis, the ill-starred inn-keeper, having ventured by night to Maryston—all his excursions of late had been in the dark—took cold, and died of a catarrh in three days.

The inn, nearly reduced to a state of siege; the inn-keeper himself having long been an invisible and intangible substance, hid away from warrants, arrests, and other personal dangers, among the dilapidated lumber rooms and garrets of the old house; the people thinking more of a moonlit flitting than of improving the traffic of the forlorn "Good Woman;" when the proprietor died, that procedure upon his part was kept as secret as every other of late had been, and not altogether without cause, for there were those among his incensed creditors who were by no means incapable of the legal barbarity of arresting his corpse.

Thus came the mystery and suspicion with which my Aunt and Winnie were received—the coffin being expected hourly, and a grave opened, in the dark, in the neighbouring churchyard. The Irish maid, whose head was full of the disguises and stratagems of which she had heard so much in her own ingenious and turbulent country, was, for a while, disposed to think that the unseasonable visitors were myrmidons of the law in disguise. The fat, dowdy woman, who emerged, with blubbered cheeks, when they entered, and whose lamentations subsequently my Aunt heard when she visited her trunk on the stair-head, was the widow of the departed proprietor.

The rest, I think, explains itself; and the reader will be, no doubt, glad to learn that my Aunt's visit to Winderbrooke was, on the whole, satisfactory, and that she lived for many years to recount, by the fireside, to hushed listeners, this "winter's tale" of her adventures in "The Good Woman."

FITZGERALD'S LIFE OF STERNE.

TILL these volumes* appeared, England possessed no biography of one of the quaintest and most fascinating of her humorists. We adopt for convenience the term humorist, and Mr. Thackeray's doubtful limitation of the phrase. Why so capital an omission has remained for so long unsupplied is a point admitting of many conjectural solutions. The fact is enough for us, and that Mr. Fitzgerald has adequately filled a great blank in the gallery of our national literary portraiture we shall presently demonstrate. A series of contributions from his pen upon the subject of this biography appeared in successive numbers of this Magazine. The material which they supplied has been embodied in the narrative. It shall be, however, from that larger portion of the work which has never seen the light in any shape or disguise previously to its appearance in its present form that we shall derive the extracts we mean to submit, and the thesis of our commentary. As a subject for a biography, nothing could be more effective than Sterne. It was Mr. Forster who very happily entitled the first edition of his charming memoirs, The "Life and *Adventures* of Oliver Goldsmith;" a title which he afterwards modified into the more staid "Life and *Times* of Goldsmith." But Sterne's odd existence was indeed a tissue of strange adventures. Extravagant loves, gipsy rambles, awkward scrapes, social triumphs, and strange complications. He was hampered by his cloth, and the gown of which his cloth was made. But though this was a fatal embarrassment in a biographical view, it makes the situations more dramatic. And one of the most welcome conclusions which we are led to draw, after closing these volumes, is that Mr. Sterne's existence was even more Shandean than his "Shandy;" and that the books he wrote, and the extravagances he penned, were not, as has been always insinuated, "patches on the harlequin's jacket," flung aside as soon as the pantomime was over. It is comforting to those who love to know deceased men of letters as they do personal friends; to feel interest and sympathy for their ways and habits, to love them as some are led to love even the Johnson of Boswell; it is comforting, we say, to feel, that Sterne corresponds with his books; and that his life and temper reflected Shandeism as much as "Tristram."

More valuable still are these volumes as a refutation of what may be called the unaccountable prejudices of the late Mr. Thackeray. We are glad that no affectation of forced delicacy has prevented Mr. Fitzgerald doing what was his duty in this case; and that the prevailing tone of sympathy and sentiment for the loss of one great humorist, whom the nation is now lamenting, has not stood in the way of justice to the memory of a greater master of humour. At the same time the task has been done with a scrupulous delicacy, and even gentleness, worthy of all praise. The warmest and most sensitive of the author of "Vanity Fair's" friends, could not object to the calm and even tender fashion in which what we may call the monstrous image he set up of the great Shandean has been cast down.

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* "Life of Laurence Sterne." By Percy Fitzgerald, Esq., M.R.I.A. London: Chapman and Hall.

We have been favoured with early sheets of the work, on which we rely for our notice.

In truth this strange view of Mr. Thackeray approached almost to a "phobia." The name of Sterne seemed to have the effect of infuriating him like a piece of scarlet cloth. In the *Cornhill Magazine* he came back again and again to the subject. He tossed and gored the unhappy Yorick—called him "sniveller," "mountebank," "wretched, worn-out old scamp," "driveller," "a street tumbler," a "great jester, not a great humorist." Long after, in his reading, he lighted on a story to the Shandean's prejudice. Forthwith he rushed into a "Roundabout" apropos of "Boots," and printed it. It seems unaccountable in one who was so great a humorist himself; who had the large faith of a humorist, and the warm and generous admiration for Fielding, and Smollett, and Goldsmith.

Even the "Lecture" on English Humorists, besides its mistaken *tone*, is shown to be full of serious mistakes; though the author of this biography has considerately put by his corrections, as it were, in a private place, and banished them to the Appendix.

Of Sterne's character, Mr. Fitzgerald gives us, with the freedom of conversation, and the conciseness of an epitaph, his own masculine and vivid estimate, at the close of his "life." It carries with it the weight of the vast mass of evidence which he has accumulated, and the writer delivers it with the matured convictions, and the judicial balancing, which befits the conflict of testimony and the conspicuous interest of the case. He says:—

> "It is strange to think that there were people who might have taken the skull of a second Yorick into their hand, as the Prince of Denmark did that of the first, and have moralized over it sadly. They might have thought of his life, weighed his character, not too partially, but tenderly and with allowance,—as I have striven to do in this memoir to the best of my poor ability,—and have summed up all, something after this fashion: He was more or less weak, vain, careless, idle, and given to pleasure;—these were his natural faults. He was free of pen and speech—profane sometimes—and did not honour the gown he wore;—these were the general scandals of his time, which seized on him like a contagion. But beside those faults or vices, were the redeeming traits of a generous sympathy and warmth, kind fatherly affection, a careful consideration (wonderful in a careless being) for the pecuniary interests of those for whom it was his duty to provide, a genial humour, and, strange as it may seem, a tone of natural piety. He was unfortunate in his marriage—unfortunate in his friends—unfortunate in the age, which seemed to strive how it should turn his head with flatteries; unfortunate in a frame that was always ailing. His were, in short, as he said over and over again so pathetically, follies of heart and not the head. These hindrances should be kept in view; and, when we would anticipate the task of the Recording Angel, should prompt us not to blot out the entry for ever, but to make a gentle and charitable judgment."

The first characteristic that impresses on reading these volumes is, the enthusiasm, and almost love, with which the author deals with his subject. Many readers will, perhaps, decline to be led to the conclusion desired; but all will appreciate the honest ardour and genuine sympathy with which the task is done. The result is a figure of flesh and blood, that lives, walks, thinks, and stumbles (morally)—that we can take by the hand, that we see with our eyes, that if we condemn, we must at least pity. How much better this than the "dry bones" biographies which have been too much the fashion—stuffed with chaff and husks; of which the recently published life of Warburton is but a sample. All honour to Mr. Forster for being the first to introduce living men on the stage. The art of this style is the presence of an abundance of detail. Detail gives life; but there must be a certain skill and knowledge of detail. Infinitely precious, therefore, become magazine scraps, patches from newspapers, allusions in obscure memoirs, old engravings, and a hundred other sources.

These volumes are, indeed, a series of pictures. There can be no question that the miniature detail and concentration of colour in which he delights are valuable as contributing to picturesque effect, even on so large a canvas. Everything in these volumes may be said to be new. We are introduced into a new state of society—to a new inner life. It is pleasant, for instance, to see the old York manners, and the old York ladies and gentlemen, going to the balls given in "Lord Burlington's Assembly-rooms." Pleasant, too, as a picture, is the view of London society when Mr. Sterne "came upon town," his being "hurried off his legs" with great people, his dinners, his routs, his levees in his "lodgings in ye Pall Mall." Pleasantest of all are the pictures of travel in France, which touch a long-forgotten chord, and which no book that we can recollect has dealt with; for there is here a mine of picturesque effect—the diligences, the postilions "in boots like fire-buckets," the wayside inns, the old French houses, and the provincial life of the old French towns, his photograph of Toulouse and Montpelier, in short, the tracing of Mr. Sterne over every inch of ground in the "Sentimental Journey," to his very inns and post-houses. Here, for instance, is a picture of a French *ménage* at Toulouse. A good-natured Gallo-Irish Abbe, M'Arty, found out a suitable residence for Sterne and his family in that town.

"They were lodged delightfully, just outside the town, in a stately house, elegant, charmingly furnished, built in the form of a hotel, with a court in front, and opening behind on pretty gardens laid out in serpentine walks, and considered the finest in the place. These grounds were so large and so much admired, that all the ladies and gentlemen of that quarter used to come and promenade there on the autumn evenings, and were welcome to Mr. Sterne. Inside, there was a fine dining-room and a spacious reception-room—quite as good as Baron d'Holbach's at Paris; three handsome bedrooms with dressing-rooms; and two good rooms below, dedicated to Yorick—where he wrote his adventures. There were cellars in abundance. Mr. Sterne was in raptures with it all—revelled in his seigneurie of such a mansion—thought it only 'too good by half for us;' but felt comfort in the wonderfully moderate rent—only thirty pounds a year! For this modest rent, too, his landlord, M. Sligniac, was to "keep up" the gardens. Nay, there was a pretty country-house not far off—an old chateau, with a pavilion attached to it—where Mr. Sterne used to write his Shandy's in, and which he christened 'Don Pringello's,' in compliment to one of the Crazy Castle set—which M. Sligniac gave him the use of, when they required it, all for the same modest figure! Something of this is to be accounted for in the cheapness of the times. Even twenty years back, such charming retreats on the edge of a French provincial town, were to be secured by the economic stranger. But something, too, I suspect, must be placed to the account of the tenant's seductive and pleasant ways.

"The whole establishment was organized in a few days. Mr. Sterne loved to revel in this new housekeeping. They had an excellent cook, a *femme-de-chambre*, and 'a good-looking *laquais*' (Francois, most likely). He found out that they could live 'for very, very little.' Wood was the only thing dear; and by-and-by they found that, keeping a capital table, two hundred and fifty pounds would be their whole yearly expenditure. He at once put himself on a course of ass's milk three times a day, and began to get strong again."

This is all new and welcome ground, and is full of picturesque detail. The history of "Desseins," that most romantic of inns, is given fully, and is highly curious. We clatter through Calais, through Montreuil, where La Fleur was hired, and we see an host of the hotel which we stayed at, and actually learn his name, and post up to Paris. At Dessein's Hotel, however, we take leave to pause for a short space, and inspect the premises with the pleasant biographer of the sentimental traveller.

"What a tide of travellers has flowed steadily from the packets, since those sentimental times, making awkwardly and timorously for the hotel, and asking in their best damaged French to be shown the cynosure of the establishment, 'Sterne's room.' What endless processions upstairs, preceded by obsequious waiterdom, until the door, with the inscription in gilt letters, 'Sterne's Room,' is reached! What reverence, what suppressed breathings, what almost palpable visions of the departed humorist! The air seems charged with sentimental aroma, it seems but yesterday he sat in that very chair. The favourite print, too, is over the chimney-piece. A profitable show-room on the whole. People have asked, and paid dearer, for the favour of *sleeping* in Sterne's chamber; endless reveries, meditations, and general magazine literature, has been concocted there. Nay, only yesterday, as it were, a famous English author passed through—stayed the night at 'Dessein's,' occupied 'Sterne's Room,' dreamt on him, meditated on him, could almost see him sitting there in his 'black satin smalls,' held converse with him, and finally wrote 'a roundabout' on him. Yet, see what freaks the imagination will play.

"That pleasant detective traveller of forty years ago was taken, as usual, into 'Sterne's Room,' number Thirty-one, was shown the Sir Joshua mezzotint over the chimney-piece, and yet was sceptical. The outside of the house was all over-grown with vine-leaves, and the traveller, shrewdly suspecting there might be some record of the date of erection cut on the stone, sent up a man on a ladder to cut away the vine-leaves, an operation which led to the discovery of a tablet—

A.D. 1770.

Alas! just two years too late for the credit of 'Sterne's Room.' This is fatal to all the reverent pilgrimages made for nearly a hundred years back, and, indeed, made every day; fatal, too, to the fine writing and conjuring up of the 'lean, hectic-looking parson' and his 'black satin smalls.'*

"The waiter, however, in no way disconcerted, offered to fix on another room in the house, and call it Sterne's!"

Like those who have "entertained angels unawares," M. Dessein found himself all the better for the chance visit of Yorick.

"Dessein's fame increased. His hotel was 'thought to be the most expensive in Europe.' He offered the traveller Burgundy, the best in his cellar, for five livres, which was declined as being monstrously dear! The monk used to come in until a very recent date, asking alms, being preserved as a sort of imperishable institution. Such a one—gentle, resigned-looking man, almost 'mild, pale, and penetrating'—presented himself to the late Mr. Rogers and his friend, as they were sitting over their wine; and the friend, to the gentle poet's annoyance, made some such speech as Mr. Sterne made to his monk. 'Il faut travailler,' said Mr. Rogers's friend; and the monk, bowing his head meekly, without a word, withdrew. There is intrinsic evidence in all Mr. Sterne's characters and incidents that they are taken from life and experience; but those *external* proofs which turn up now and again are certain testimonies to his accuracy.

"Mrs. Piozzi must have seen this very famous monk, who she calls Father Felix, and whose 'manners and story,' she says, struck Doctor Johnson exceedingly when he came through. The great moralist pronounced that so complete a character could scarcely be found in romance. He had been, like Mr. Sterne's monk, a soldier; knew English; read Addison and Napier, and played on the violin. He had been there about the year 1772, and was remarkable then; so it does seem likely that he was Mr. Sterne's Father Lorenzo. And Mrs. Piozzi was glad to hear that he was alive, and had only gone into Spain.

"She sat in Dessein's parlour, and wrote the first pages of her pleasant Tour. Her sketch of Calais, as seen from the window, is a photograph:—'The women in long white cambric cloaks; soldiers with whiskers; girls in neat slippers, and short petticoats, contrived to show them; postillions with greasy night-caps and vast jack-boots, driving your carriage, harnessed with ropes, and adorned with sheepskins.'

"Frederick Reynolds, in those free-and-easy memoirs which he has left behind him, sets out some droll adventures at Calais. He, too, put up at the famous Dessein's, and burning with veneration for the author of Tristram, actually stopped the Innkeeper on the stairs, to ask him about the great humorist. This was about the year 1775, when Monsieur Dessein was a little advanced in life, and wore a tail and curls of curious size. The youth asked him boldly if he recollected Mr. Sterne. The other answered with a true theatrical pose—'Your countryman, Monsieur Sterne, von great, von very great man! and he carry me vid him to posterity. He gain moche money for his Journey of Sentiment—*mais moi.* I made more through the means of dat dan he by all his *ouvrages réunis.* Ha!' He then threw himself into a sort of Tristram attitude, placing his forefinger on his breast, said—'*Qu'en pensez vous?*' and disappeared with mystery. Allowing for the wild, rollicking tone of these recollections, and the exaggeration which is common to the writings of every comedian, from Tate Wilkinson downwards, it does somehow seem to fit the traditional likeness of the host of the Hôtel d'Angleterre.

"Selwyn knew him, and recommended that quasi-daughter of his, Mademoiselle Fagnani, about whom he was nearly crazy, to his care. The wild Duke of Queensberry knew him. In short, everybody knew him. He cleared parcels through the custom-house for his noble friends. And Oliver—the *one* Oliver—not the stern Puritan, but the gentle Goldy, on that expedition with the Hornecks, before mentioned—came straight to Sterne's Hotel, and put up with Dessein. A famous and delightful humorist, who might surely have given immortality to, at least, a hotel; but that fit of comic jealousy, which he once assumed because the people in the street kept staring at some painted women in a gallery and overlooked him, was but a type of his destiny in life."

While upon the "Sentimental Journey," it may be as well to extinguish one of those false lights, "the Pucks" of biography, as the elder Disraeli happily terms them, who mislead the benighted explorer. It is a pity that the criminal code does not provide for this worst type of forgers. Mr. Fitzgerald has gone in the spirit of the Nisi Prius Bar into the case and pretensions of La Fleur, who totally breaks down under his scrutiny. The process is curious and amusing.

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* The writer exposed this really comic mistake in a recent number of the *Athenæum*.

"He was asked, too, about the private life and habits of his late master, and all his details have a suspiciously melodramatic air. Mr. Sterne would fall at times into profound fits of melancholy, and would smile at his valet's well-meant efforts to amuse him. At other times he would burst into unreasonable fits of gaiety, and shout 'Vive la bagatelle!' He was dreadfully affected by the crowds of destitute and poor which he encountered everywhere. 'These poor people oppress me, La Fleur,' he said; 'how shall I relieve them?' The starling was a genuine bird—he made him a present to his valet, who brought him over to England. 'But I never heard him speak,' said La Fleur, sorrowfully; 'perhaps he had forgot his note.' The hint of the starling, as we have seen, was from Sterne's own crest. The passport La Fleur considered a very grave business, 'and M. de Bretieul,' said the valet, 'with all his Shakespeare, could never have procured it. He was inindebted for it to the Marquis de Lambertin.' But one little fact stamps his story with grave suspicion. He described Mr. Sterne writing far into the night, and could not understand how he could have printed so very short an account of his travels. 'For,' says the valet, 'upon our return from a tour, we had *a large trunk* completely filled with papers.' This is quite inconsistent with Mr. Sterne's habits; and it is a fact, that he did not begin to write a line of his journey until more than a year after he got home. The valet was then asked, 'Do you know anything of their tendency, La Fleur?' 'Yes,' said he, '*miscellus remarks* on the manners of different nations. He was always making elaborate inquiries as to his form of government, &c., and studied a good deal in the libraries of the "patrons of learning"'—the last field of inquiry in the world Mr. Sterne would have entered on, or would have been inclined. The valet shook his head sadly when the grissette was mentioned, and merely remarked 'she was very pretty.' Still, he added handsomely, that Mr. Sterne's conversation with women was always of the 'most interesting' kind—praise which, however, seems a little qualified by the remark, that 'he usually left them serious, if he did not find them so.' He furnished details about his own personal history; how he had married the elder of two sisters at Montreuil (he had the scene Mr. Sterne sketched from his own window before his eyes), one who rather 'resembled Maria of Moulines;' how she earned only six sous a day by mantua-making—they set up a cabaret for the English sailors; how this failing them through the war they separated, and she finally disappeared with a company of strolling actors.

"The whole thing is contradictory and suspicious; but that it was considered of importance by Sir Walter Scott, scarcely deserved serious notice in Mr. Sterne's life. There is reason to believe that La Fleur was a mere fanciful name, which Sterne found in Moreri, among the materials for the curious chapter on 'whiskers,' where, too, he found La Fosseuse and other names.

"On the whole, I believe the true solution to be, that some laquais de place or hotel-waiter, from Calais or elsewhere, who had seen him once or twice, had by some chance come to England; and finding his meagre details profitable and exciting, had gradually enlarged his character as to that of La Fleur, the valet. A glance at the 'Sentimental Journey' would have furnished him with hints; or could this be the French valet that Frederick Reynolds picked up at Calais, and took with him on his travels, and whom he insisted should change his name to La Fleur, and whom he addressed as such all through his journey? After their connexion was terminated, the Frenchman might have been reluctant to drop the historical name he had grown so accustomed to, and might find his account in not repudiating the glories of Mr. Sterne's original body servant. That 'La Fleur' was not the real name of the valet, I have ascertained beyond a doubt. Mr. Sterne found it in a farce of Foote's, acted the very year of his sentimental travels, entitled 'The Commissary." He read in the playbill, 'La Fleur, a French valet,' and cooly appropriated the name for his own follower."

Of the Montpellier physician we have a very amusing sketch. His treatment would have looked like a tradition of Gil Blas, were it not that we know that quackery is probably as old as human nature, and will last as long.

"This treatment was indeed barbarous, and reads like a bit of Molière. Anything more ludicrously inefficient for a consumptive cannot be conceived. They almost poisoned him with a succession of what they called *bouillons refraichissants*, the elements of which were 'a cock *flayed* alive, and boiled with poppy seeds, these pounded in a mortar afterwards passed through a sieve.' There besides to be present one crawfish, which should be a male one. This was *de riguer*, a female crawfish being likely to be fatal! This precious composition must have been devised specially for the English, and for that malady of '*consumption*,' which we are told was peculiar to them.

"There can be no question but that the physician who prescribed this primitive nostrum for Mr. Sterne was the same M. F——, whom Smollett consulted when he visited Montpellier the following year.

It is the most amusing passage in his travels. There was an English physician resident there, Dr. Fitzmaurice; but M. F——, that great lanthorn of medicine, was at the head of the local faculty. Smollett sent him his fee of a louis, by a servant, and his 'case' drawn up in true medicinal Latin; and on the morning after received back a sheet of remarks in French, the ignorance in which showed him clearly that his 'case' had not been read, or that its language was among the acquirements of the Montpellier physicians. But with the remarks came a prescription, the favourite *bouillons refraichissants*, precisely the same as Mr Sterne's, containing the '*petit poulet*,' *le chair*, *le sang*, *le cœur*, *et le foie* '*d'une tortue*,' and the garden seeds. On receipt of which, the patient sent him twelve livres, and a characteristic note, 'Ce n'est pas sans raison que M. F—— jouit d'un si grand reputation. Je n'ai plus de doutes, graces à Dieu et à M. F——.'

"The doctor's reply was no less happy. 'Monsieur n'a plus de doutes. J'en sais charmé! Reçu 12 livres. He was indeed an arrant charlatan, and Mr. Sterne, comparing notes with the Scotch physician at Toulon, told him of an unhappy English youth named Oswald, son to a merchant, who had fallen into their caprices.

"The young man, in the last stage of consumption, took his *bouillons refraichissants* for above a month, with the worst results! and on his complaining, was told precisely as Mr. Sterne had been told: 'Sir, the air of this place is too sharp for your lungs.' 'Then,' said the other, you are a sordid villain to have kept me here.' He went to Toulouse, where he died in a few weeks."

Of Laurence Sterne's various moods, his affectations, and his sincerities, we learn probably all we are likely ever to know in these pleasant and philosophical tomes. That his spirits oscilated violently as those of excitable persons will, is not surprising. Even *Falstaff* has his compunctious visitings, and Yorick's moments of subsidence and gloom were possibly as unpleasantly haunted. The following passages give us some idea of the author of "Tristram Shandy" among his fellow men, and in his gaiety and his vapours :—

"Mr. Cradock, the amateur actor and dramatist, once met him behind the scenes at Drury-lane, and found him in very low spirits. He suggested to him—what any one familiar with the dramatic power of his writings would long to suggest—that he should try his hand at something for the stage—a comedy, for instance. He seemed greatly struck with the idea; but, 'with tears in his eyes,' adds Mr. Cradock, professed his utter ignorance of the business of the stage. 'That,' said the other, 'could easily be supplied.' There is no doubt that this was but a minor difficulty, which Garrick and his many dramatic friends would have helped him over. The idea had already occurred to him; for, in one of his 'Shandys,' he breaks out into an apostrophe to his friend: 'O Garrick, what a rich scene of this would thy exqusite powers make! *And how gladly would I sit down and write such another to avail myself of thy immortality, and secure my own behind it.*' But the ease and fluency with which whole 'Shandys' could be reeled off, was a different thing from the care and even drudgery which work for the stage entails. This perhaps was the true reason. Others, however, as will be seen later, were found to dramatise what he himself had written.

"This Mr. Cradock seems to have known him intimately, and once more had the satisfaction of making him 'laugh heartily,' by telling him a story about Tristam Shandy. Mr. Cradock had lent a matter-of-fact gentlemen a dry philosophical work, well known to the curious as Harris's 'Hermes,' of which the gentlemen read portions very steadily, and then returned it with the remark, 'that all these *imitations of Tristram Shandy* were very poor things, and *fell far short of the original.*'

"It might have been about this time that Mr. Sterne found himself in company where there were several clergymen, and began to tell comic stories of his parochial experiences: how at York, after preaching at the Cathedral, an old woman whom he had observed sitting on the pulpit steps, stopped him as he came down,* asked where he would preach the following Sunday. Mr. Sterne told her 'where he was to exhibit,' says the account; and on that day found her again waiting for him, when she again put the same question. The next sermon was to be at Stillington; and to his great surprise, at Stillington he found her. 'On which,' said Mr. Sterne, telling the story to the clergymen, 'I prepared a sermon specially for the following Sunday, expecting to find my old woman as before; "I will grant the request of this poor widow, lest by her often coming she weary me," 'Why, Sterne,' said one of the company, 'you have left out the most applicable bit of the whole—"Though I fear neither God, nor regard man."' It is said the retort silenced Mr. Sterne for the rest of the evening."

That Sterne, the writer, did not always keep his fingers from picking and stealing, but helped himself with a cheerful conscience and an iniquitous vanity to other men's property, Mr. FitzGerald demonstrates. His sermons teem with evidence of this sort of larceny; and in his "Sentimental Journey," and "Shandy," the *chevalier d'industrie* does not forget his cunning. Here is an indictment with three counts, conclusively supported by proof.

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* Adam's Anecdotes. Though no authority is given, the story is so exact in local details, I have no hesitation in accepting it as true.

> "Lovers of Sterne will, however, regret that at least three of his most charming thoughts should not have been his own. We must give up Uncle Toby's fly—the pretty bit of consolation to Maria. 'God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb'*—and, what is the greatest sacrifice, Captain Shandy's famous recording angel. The fly, according to Balzac, was originally put out of the window by James the First of England, who made a remark exactly the same as that of Uncle Toby. His 'shorn lamb' is found in the French '*a brebis tondue*,' and there is a very similar thought in the 'Outlandish Proverbs, selected by Mr. G. H., 1640.' 'To a close shorne sheepe God gives wind by measure.' And the famous recording angel has a parallel in a MS. by a monk Alberic, who lived about the year 1100. 'A demon holds a book in which are written the sins of a particular man, and an angel drops on it from a phial a tear which the sinner had shed in doing a good action, and his sins are washed out.' This, however, is quite a coincidence, for Sterne could never have seen the monk's MS. And Sterne's thought is exquisitely artistic, both in brevity, dramatic effect, and music.† Mr. Moore worked the idea into his 'Peri' without scruple."

The pretty monkish alegory has, no doubt, often reappeared; and simple "coincidence" is far less probable than Sterne's unacknowledged indebtedness to some comparatively modern and obscure reproducer of the image. Of his orthography and his French his biographer makes a whimsical and woful exposure. He observes how amusing it is to see, in the "Sentimental Journey" at least, the printers carefully repaired his English spelling mistakes; for his French, as "reading" was then conducted, they could do nothing. "Tristram Shandy," however, he observes, is thickly sown with blunders in orthography of every shade of aggravation; Mr. FitzGerald remarks that—

> "His spelling in the MS. 'Sentimental Journey' (amended by the printers) does not do credit to the Halifax schoolmasters. He spells 'magazine' 'magazeen,' 'buyer' 'byer,' 'metals' 'mettles,' 'meagre' 'meager,' 'vineyard' 'vinierd,' 'chevalier' chevilier,' 'ass' 'asse,' 'good wine' 'goad wine;' 'sought' 'saught,' 'forty' 'fourty,' with many more. His French, however, on which he prided himself, was very weak indeed, both in spelling and grammar. He had a happy instinct for the idioms, which he generally succeeded in grasping, though not in the correct shape. His French letters must have amused his French friends.
>
> "He starts with a famous little carriage that only held one passenger, and which he makes masculine instead of feminine—a *désobligeant* instead of a *désobligeante*. The little French captain addresses the French lady in this odd language—'Apparament vous etez Flammande?' leaving out the 'que.' He also questions her as to where she came from, 'Vous n'etez pas de Londre?' But perhaps the most curious mistake of the whole series occurs at the inn in Montreuil (which Mr. Sterne spells in many awkward ways, shifting from Montriul to Montriuil), where the landlord, speaking of Jamatone, tells how 'un mylord anglais presentoit un ecu a la fille de chambre,' where he uses 'présenter' in the usual sense of 'donner' or 'offrir,' uses the imperfect instead of the aorist; and, finally, makes Janatone a 'fille de chambre,' instead of a 'fille d'auberge,' or 'la fille' simply. The strange use 'présenter' mystified the French translators wonderfully; and the oddest part of the whole is that in his MS. he had 'donnoit,' but struck it out.
>
> "Although he confounds 'fille de chambre' and 'femme de chambre,' turning the former invariably into 'ladies'-maid,' the the latter into 'house-maid.' La Fleur becomes a 'garçon de bonne fortune,' and rides a horse 'le plus opinionâtre du monde' —a quality of animal never seen in French before. He puts 'mal-apropos' for 'hors de propos.' The same famous servant was gifted with a certain captivating 'prevenancy;' '*for* there was a passport in his very looks' which drew everyone to hin. These are merely specimens; but it is not too much to say, that every bit of French imported into the 'Sentimental Journey' is faulty in some degree.
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> "When the lady is shut up in the carriage with Mr. Sterne, she exclaims, not, 'Voilà ce qui est plaisant'—as a French lady might

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* Many pious persons have supposed that this is to found in the Scripture, and a clergyman is said to have actually preached a sermon upon that text.

† 'Black as the damned drops that fall
From the denouncing Angel's pen
Ere Mercy weeps them out again.'

say—but, 'C'est bien comique,' which is true English-French. More droll still is his calling the landlord of his hotel the 'maître d'hôtel.'"

How industrious and thoughtful, notwithstanding, was his revision of his manuscript, remains in autographic proof. Mr. FitzGerald says that—

"Some of these MS. still remain. At Skelton Castle is a book or two of 'Tristram;' in the British Museum is the first half of the 'Sentimental Journey;' and Mr. Rogers showed Mr. Moore one morning the original of one of the Sermons, also carefully corrected. It struck Mr. Moore that one of these emendations was scarcely an improvement. Speaking of the Jews, he had called them 'a thoughtless and thankless people,' for which he substituted 'this thankless and peculiarly ungrateful people.'

It is plain, we think, that Mr. Sterne intended here striking out the word "thankless." He could not have premeditated so barren a tautology as the passage now presents. It would then have stood, "this thoughtless and peculiarly ungrateful people."

"In the Shelton MS. is a slight alteration which shows great nicety of touch. 'O Garrick,' he said, 'how gladly would I sit down and write such another,' &c., which he compressed into 'how gladly would I write such another.' But the 'Sentimental Journey' MS. is the most curious instance of careful elaboration,* and some of the alterations are so characteristic, that I do not scruple to pause a little in this place and examine them in detail.

"Thus, in the first few lines, 'my gentleman' turned on him originally 'with the most civil *insolence* in the world,' which on reflection seemed a little contradictory, so he made it 'triumph.' For 'should give these rights,' he put 'should give a man these rights,' and 'I am determined to look into them,' became 'I'll look into them.' Speaking to the monk, he distinguished between certain persons and others 'who have no other plan in the world but to be a burden to it for the love of God,' which became, 'no other plan in life but to get through it in sloth and ignorance, for the love of God.' And when the poor Franciscan meekly bowed his head and made no reply, 'Nature seemed to have done with her resentments in him; *at least* she showed none,' none but a master of the elegancies of English would have struck out that 'at least.' When the door was shut, Mr. Sterne uttered two 'Pshaw's,' which he reduced to one. For 'the whole body of travellers,' he substituted, with more elegance, 'the whole circle of travellers,' and for 'in quest of knowledge,' put 'in pursuit,' 'Four long months' had elapsed since the *désobligeante* had finished its course, but he drew his pen through the word 'long.' But the most amusing alteration is in the meditation on this famous *desobligeante.* The sentence now stands, 'and when a few words will rescue misery out of her distress, I hate the man who can be a churl of them'—but it was originally, 'when a few *little* words will set the post-chaise of an innocent traveller agoing,' &c. How much the phrase has gained by the alteration is plain. He even finds it difficult to satisfy himself as to the position of the words 'M. Dessein.' 'It must cast a damp, M. Dessein, upon your spirits—you suffer as much as the machine,' did not sound so musical as 'must cast a damp upon your spirits—you suffer, M. Dessein, as much as the machine.'

"When he and the lady were shut up in remise—'a colloquy of five in such a situation, which, by the way, is one of those things which can happen to a man but once in his life,' was an idea that first occurred to him, but he afterwards struck out the last half of the sentence. He altered 'overthrows' to 'discomfitures'—'hurt' to 'mystified.' 'It begat a silence,' offended him, and became 'we remained silent.' It is almost droll to see what his sentiment had betrayed him into writing on Father Lorenzo's grave, 'they all struck so forcibly upon my affections that I wept over him as *a widow.*' This seemed a little ambiguous, and it became 'I burst into a flood of tears.' This refining process is nowhere so exemplified as in the ending to the story of the 'grisset.' It stood originally, 'so counting the money into her hand, and with a lower bow than one generally makes to a shopkeeper's wife, I went out,' &c.—originally it had the coarser shape of, 'and giving it (her hand) something betwixt a shake and a squeeze as I did it, we both returned our thanks together.' It is very curious, being thus admitted behind the scenes.

Something of Yorick's death-bed will not be without its interest and its moral. Upon these closing scenes Mr. FitzGerald has concentrated many lights.

"This was now at hand. About the second week of the next month, being still 'tied down neck and heels with engagements,' he was seized with a chest attack, which he took for influenza, but which clung to him with more than usual obstinacy. He struggled with it, and seemed to think he would as usual come off victorious. Just at that time a letter came to him from his daughter, which must have had a chilling, dispiriting effect, notwithstanding that it set out with news of 'the Journey' being read and admired in York by every one.

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* It is the very copy that went to the press, for the printer's pencil-marks are still on it. It came from the Farnborough family, who possess several articles that once belonged to Sterne.

" Mrs. Sterne and her daughter had been prudently forecasting the future; and the mother had told her daughter that it was Mr. Sterne's intention to bequeath the care of his Lydia to the Indian lady, whom the world knew as Eliza. 'The subject of my letter,' wrote Mr. Sterne, with some agitation, 'has astonished me. She could know but little of my feelings to tell thee that I should bequeath thee as a legacy to Mrs. Draper.' He then reassures her, and tells how Mrs. James will watch over 'my friend whom I have so often talked and wrote about; from her you will learn to be an affectionate wife, a tender mother, and a sincere friend.' He then alludes to the success of his book; 'but is the gratification of my feelings on this occasion—the want of health bows me down—this vile influenza —*be not alarmed, I think I shall get the better of it*, and shall be with you both the first of May; and if I escape, 'twill not be for a long period, my child, unless a quiet retreat and peace of mind can restore me.' "

Upon this Mr. FitzGerald comments with his accustomed tenderness.

" Nothing can be more tenderly delicate than that hurried correction of himself, 'be not alarmed, I think I shall get the better of it;' and the gentle way—almost artful—in which he goes on to prepare his daughter's mind for the worst. 'If I escape, 'twill not be for a long period, my child. But I think, my Lydia, thy mother will survive me—do not deject her spirits with thy affections on my account.' He sends them both a present of a necklace and buckles. 'I am never alone,' he goes on, 'the kindness of my friends is ever the same. *I wish, though, I had thee to nurse me; but I am deny'd that.* Write to me twice a week at least. God bless thee, my child; and believe me *ever, ever* thy affectionate father,

'L. S.'

" 'If I ever revisit Coxwould!' He was hurrying fast to that 'sweet retirement.' What he took for a 'vile influenza,' became a pleurisy; and on the Thursday following (March 10th) he was bled three times, and on the next day blistered. On the Tuesday he was prostrate and exhausted after this violent treatment; but as he lay there, the thought of the child he loved so dearly came upon him, and with a feeble hand he was just able to write a few tottering characters to his friend, Mrs. James. So piteous and touching an appeal has rarely come from a death-bed: it was the poor, broken, gasping, dying Yorick's last letter. In it we seem to hear an humble acknowledgment of errors, and a cry for pardon for 'follies which my heart, not my head, betrayed me into!'—a declaration we may accept as genuine, and which is the true key to all his Shandean sins, errors, mistakes, and follies.

" 'To Mrs. J——.

" '25th March, Tuesday.

" 'Your poor friend is scarce able to write ——he has been at death's door this week with a pleurisy——I was bled three times on Thursday, and blistered on Friday —— The physician says I am better—God knows, for I feel myself sadly wrong, and shall, if I recover, be a long while of gaining strength.——Before I have gone thro' half this letter, I must stop to rest my weak hand above a dozen times—Mr. J—— was so good to call upon me yesterday. I felt emotions not to be described at the sight of him, and he overjoy'd me by talking a great deal of you.——Do, dear Mrs. J——, entreat him to come to-morrow, or next day, for perhaps I have not many days, or hours, to live—I want to ask a favour of him, if I find myself worse —— that I shall beg of you, if in this wrestling I come off conqueror—my spirits are fled— 'tis a bad omen—do not weep, my dear lady—— your tears are too precious to shed for me——bottle them up, and may the cork never be drawn.——Dearest, kindest, gentlest, and best of women! may health, peace, and happiness prove your handmaids. ——If I die, cherish the remembrance of me, and forget the follies which you so often condemned—which my heart, not my head, betray'd me into. Should my child, my Lydia, want a mother, may I hope you will (if she is left parentless) take her to your bosom?—You are the only woman on earth I can depend upon for such a benevolent action.——I wrote to her a fortnight ago, and told her what, I trust, she will find in you ——Mr. J—— will be a father to her— he will protect her from every insult, for he wears a sword which he has served his country with, and which he would know how to draw out of the scabbard in defence of innocence.——Commend me to him—as I now commend you to that Being who takes under his care the good and kind part of the world.—Adieu! all grateful thanks to you and Mr. J——.

" 'Your poor affectionate friend,

" 'L. STERNE.' "

We are now at the verge of that awful hour when this strange and wayward spirit was to go to his dread account.

" This was Tuesday, Friday was the last day of his life. He seems to have been left there, at Bond-street, alone, deserted, and entirely dependent, scarcely in the sense he had wished, on the hired offices of a lodging-house servant. M. Janin, with an eye to a bit of ghastly sentimentality wholly indefensible, transforms this person into 'Mad—— de——, sa belle et aimable garde malade,' and makes the dying Yorick place her hand upon his heart.

"But little is known of his last moments. Towards four o'clock in the afternoon he complained of cold in his feet, and asked the attendant to chafe them. This seemed to relieve him, but presently he said the cold was mounting yet higher; and while she was striving to impart a warmth to his feet and ankles, which a more awful power was driving away, at this moment some one knocked at the hall-door, and the landlady opening it, found it was a footman sent to inquire after Mr. Sterne's health."

"Fish" Crawford, the well-known Macaroni, was giving a dinner party close by, in Clifford-street.

"The guests were all friends of the dying humorist; of the company were the Dukes of Grafton and Roxburgh, the Earls of March and Ossory; Mr. Garrick, Mr. Hume, and Mr. James. Some one had mentioned his illness, and it was proposed to send to know how he was, and the footman, whose name has been preserved, was despatched to New Bond-street, to inquire. The landlady was not able, or did not care, to give him the latest news, but bade him go up and inquire of the attendant. He did so, and entered the room just as the deserted Shandean was expiring. He stood by and waited to see the end; he noted how the wasted arm was suddenly raised, as if to ward off something, caught a murmur of 'Now it is come!' and then saw his frame relax in death.*

"This was Yorick's end—a footman and a nursetender watching his agonies. The footman went his way back to the merry party of gentlemen in Clifford-street, and told what he had seen. The gentlemen, he says, were all very sorry, and lamented him very much. We can almost hear this after-dinner panegyric: Hume and Garrick could have told of his freaks in Paris, and bewailed with convivial grief how Yorick had been no one's enemy but his own. Mr. James could have said something about his good heart. Then, as of course, the claret went round again, and Lord March went back again to the praises of 'the Rena,' or the 'Zamperini.'"

Even the dead body of Yorick was not exempt from the law of adventure and odd situation which ruled his eccentric, brilliant, and melancholy life. There is a horrible whimsicality in this posthumous anecdote, so picturesquely told by Mr. Fitzgerald:—

"In the Bayswater road, not very far from Tyburn Gate, a new burying-ground had been opened, attached to that church in Hanover-square where the more fashionable marriage rites were celebrated. We can readily find our way to it now, for it is notorious among the neglected graveyards of London, and found very useful as a sort of huge pit for all the rubbish of the ruinous houses that hem it in closely all round. Weeds rioting in their impurity, yawning graves, headstones staggering over, dirt, neglect; and a squalid-looking dead-house, all soiled and grimed, with a belfry and a bell. This is now the condition of the grave-yard where Laurence Sterne is supposed to lie. It was then the new buryinging-ground, near Tyburn; and to this spot, on the day of his interment, at twelve o'clock noon, came a single mourning coach, with 'two gentlemen inside.' One of them is known to have been Becket, his publisher; the other, we fairly assume to have been his friend Mr. James. The bell over the soiled and grimed dead-house was not allowed to ring. And in this 'private' manner (a privacy almost amounting to shame), was the body of the great humorist consigned to earth. The 'two gentlemen' *represented* the splendid roll of nobility and gentry that 'pranced' before his sermon-lists! One more instance of the fatal blight of desertion that seems to attend the jesters of society at their grave.

"Now follows that strange and ghastly scene in which that meagre figure of poor Yorick, upon which he and others were so often merry, was to make a last appearance.

"When the 'two gentlemen' were seeing the earth laid upon their friend's remains, there were other and more profane eyes watching from the road, and marking the spot. At that time the tribe of resurrection-men pursued their calling as lawlessly as the highwaymen did theirs upon the road. And this 'new Tyburn burying-ground had already acquired a notoriety as being the scene of constant outrages of this kind. Only a few months before it had become necessary to place regular watchers, and a large mastiff dog, in spite of which precautions, the infamous spoliation continued.'†

"Two nights after, on the 24th, these men came, took up the body, placed it in a case, and sent it away down to Cambridge.

"'Mr. Collignon, B.M.,' of Trinity, was then Professor of Anatomy, and to him it had been disposed of. These aids to medical science being costly, and procured with difficulty, Mr. Collignon invited some friends to see him illustrate his anatomy on the body that had been sent to him from London; and an old friend of Mr. Sterne, who was of the party, was inexpressibly shocked at recognising the familiar features, and fainted away on the spot. It was too late, unfortunately, to save the body from the knife, for the dissection had nearly been completed.

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* This is the account given by James Macdonald, the Scotch footman, in his "Memoirs." The passage is quoted in one of the old magazines.

† See *St. James's Chronicle*, Nov. 1767.

"What a close to Yorick's strange career, which began in wanderings, and brought him thus finally to his old University."

Everyone has heard of "Eliza and Yorick"—of the Bramin and Le Bramine. Eliza was known to have been Mrs. Draper, wife of that "Daniel Draper, Esquire, of Bombay," with whom Mr. Thackeray made so merry; but very little more was known. Here, however, we find her full history. The whole book, indeed, is sprinkled with curious little bits of information—scraps about persons and things, all strictly *apropos*, and not drawn in with violence. Puzzling initials are filled in—obscurities, as puzzling, cleared up.

These two volumes open a brightly-coloured, moving panorama of as crowded and diversified a life, and one as pleasantly contrasted, in nearly all points capable of variation, with the routine of modern existence as can well be imagined. We have London life, and rural life, and life in the provincial towns—life in Ireland, in England, and in France—life among great people, literary people, queer people; and all so exact in outline, so brightly costumed, and so racy of the hour, that one reads with the sensation of following an eye-witness.

This life of Sterne is a book for all readers, and for every mood. It has the vicissitude, the colour, and the lightness of fiction, and the force and moral of a true social picture—philosophic, comic, tragic. With Mr. Fitzgerald's pictured pages open, one wonders that such a theme should, in this age of biography, have escaped so long. The secret is, however, discoverable in the paucity of apparent and easily accessible material, in the wide field of inevitable reading, and in the imperial quest after scattered MSS., letters, records, and traditions imposed upon the Shandean explorer and collector. A conscientious labourer might have done something. But to amass all that Mr. Fitzgerald has brought together has required the unflagging stimulus of enthusiasm. It is by the amount of vigorous industry expended upon it, and of which the author speaks so modestly, that the authority of this work is we think permanently fixed. And we must add, that into no more accomplished hands could the task of working his various and fragmentary materials into a charming and harmonious narrative have fallen. There are few living writers who can analyze character with a pen at once so light and so masculine, and finish their pictures with so quaint, peculiar, and powerful a touch. Mr. Fitzgerald's "Life of Laurence Sterne" is one of the most delightful and valuable of the many modern contributions to literary biography which have so happily revolutionized the art of writing the lives of our British worthies.

THE GRAPE AND THE STAR.

Once, as a joyous village group
Caroused in crimson evening's droop,
 With cups and cakes before them,
And merriment afoot, it chanced
That while around a tree they danced
The Star of Twilight, fresh and young,
Thus whispered 'mid the grapes that hung
 In swinging clusters o'er them :—
"Ah, what a life, good joyous Vine,
Sweet laughter-loving tree, is thine!
Round thee sunny leaves are blowing,
Songs are rising, hearts are glowing,
Ah, how rich the moments flowing
O'er thee seem, compared with mine!
Though high in heaven's azure clime
I'm forced to act the pure sublime,

FELON BIOGRAPHY.

The memoirs of Jane Cameron* are in the strictest sense a biography, not a romance. In such a life, of course, there are passages impossible to be given in detail. There are others which required modification, in tenderness, for the feelings of some, and even for the safety of others, connected more or less guiltily with the narrative, but whom it would have been, at a long distance of time, unfair to compromise. The characters and events, the substance of conversations, and the record of emotions, are all presented with a conscientious literality. It is well at starting to allow the writer to speak for herself upon this point, which essentially affects the value of the narrative. She says, with these exceptions—"I claim the story to be considered as a true relation of a criminal career."

This biography is hinted in the previous work, "Female Life in Prison," by the same author. It is there a rapid outline, quite destitute of detail, but touched at a few strong points with a sharpness that leaves no question as to the identity of the subject, though the name there given is not Jane Cameron, but Mary Graham. The writer, however, fairly warns us that her nomenclature is altogether arbitrary, and in no cases has she given us the real appellatives of the prisoners. This slight anticipatory sketch, it is fair to add, is, so far as it goes, in perfect accord with the expanded narrative on which we are commenting, and is itself, therefore, a corroboration of the author's claim, if indeed that needed to be corroborated.

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* "Memoirs of Jane Cameron, Female Convict." By a Prison Matron. London: Hurst and Blackett.

If this work had been a fiction in the form of a memoir, and the character of Jane Cameron a product of fancy, the book would have indicated that highest type of genius—the wild and creative—which can summon from the unseen that which mortal thought did not conceive before, and impress the world with, in Coleridge's phrase when speaking of Ondine, a totally new idea.

As it is, it has fulfilled the latter condition with respect to that immensely preponderating class, whose knowledge of the world of crime is limited to the conventional London night-cellar and Hounslow Heath, with their tribe of melodramatic Dick Turpins, Jonathan Wilds, and Sarah Malcoms. We do not deny the special merit of the Harrison Ainsworth school—it has for many its fascination—but it is not that of truth. It is a portraiture which, in fact, no more resembles the real children of darkness than the laced and powdered shepherds and shepherdesses, whom we see in pink and sage-green lute-strings, and satins, and buckled shoes, making love on old Dresden china, do the actual herds and helpers who tend, or ever did tend, living sheep on prosaic plain or mountain.

Of criminal life in prison we have a great deal of reliable information; none more interesting than that furnished by the same author, the "Prison Matron," in that striking book, "Female Life in Prison." It is there, however, exhibited under restraint, in its artificial state, under the discipline of silence, order, and labour; and we should more favourably study natural history among the tanks and cages of a menagerie than the genuine character and nature of the convict classes within the cells and pentagons of a prison.

In the "Memoirs of Jane Cameron," however, we see them, not in their period of punishment and reserve only, but in their day of liberty and enjoyment. The spectacle is new, and appallingly impressed with that undefinable sense of reality which belongs to sharp and unexpected details, and to a sort of portraiture wholly unlike what fancy might have pictured, or anything we could have conjectured from the materials that are accessible to non-official inquiries.

The "Prison Matron" heard from her own lips the story of Jane Cameron's life, with all its details, all its traits of passion and of character, and with all its revelations concerning that subterranean system of crime, which is so finely organized, so unspeakably formidable, and yet so impenetrably concealed.

With the exception of her last imprisonment, and that portion of her life which succeeded it, and one pleasure trip, undertaken under curious circumstances, the scene of Jane Cameron's adventures is laid in the populous town of Glasgow, pronounced by competent authority to be the wickedest town, not in proportion to its population, but absolutely, in the British dominions.

"Croiley's Land," described as a nest of tall gaunt houses, not far from the High-street, and known to the police as the New Vennel, or Crescent, stands pre-eminent among all rival nurseries of crime—the Havannah Burnside, the Old Wynd, the Old Vennel, the Tontine Close, &c., as the worst haunt in Glasgow.

The construction of these houses is very much alike. "On each floor are four or five doors, opening into as many rooms, eight feet in length by six or seven feet in width; in each of these rooms men, women, and children, from four to five in number to ten or twelve, eat, drink, sleep, and live." Thieves here flock together in numbers unpleasantly large. The rents of these rooms—each termed in Scotch parlance, "a hoose"—are about fifteen pence a week—lower or higher according to circumstances, and "in every hole and corner of the place, foul disease is lurking." These dens are "well-paying property on the whole, although the rent-collecting is objectionable and at times a trifle dangerous." We can easily conceive this when we learn, that a few years since it was estimated that "the average number of robberies in *one room alone* of this densely populated quarter, was twelve a week!"

In a corner of a small room in the New Vennel, then, was Jane Cameron born on "a litter of shavings." Her mother was a drunkard and worse; her father, "whose trade it was difficult to guess at, who disappeared for weeks and months together, and turned up again, was a brutal, morose, drunken vagabond, whom Mrs. Cameron loved after a fashion, and of whom she was jealous after a wild beast fashion also."

Jenny Cameron was not permitted to enjoy a life of idleness. Even in early childhood she was expected to bring home money, and was employed at the wages of "a shilling or two a week" before she had reached her tenth year, at a Glasgow factory. This money was greedily seized upon, every Saturday night, by her mother, and generally expended in whisky, which she drank largely. Her putative father was a particularly base and cowardly villain, to whom Mrs. Cameron was attached with that strange but powerful affection which, without any assignable reason, kindness, fascination, or even one act of honest duty to account for it—binds the female to the man with whom she has mated in a lawless concubinage, with a devotion and fidelity so much excelling in strength and even in purity, that which we often see in the more respectable regions of society. The diabolical homilies which this scoundrel addressed to the child, Jenny, then just ten years of age, deserve to be recorded as evidences of the atrocious school of life and morals to which they belong. "He told her with terrible plainness," says her biographer, "what was the best manner of living, young as she was; how it was possible to benefit the family by an easier method than working at a factory. This unnatural villain did not tempt his daughter, but mingled his counsel with fierce oaths, and threatened to turn her out of doors if she did not earn more money presently." She had often known before what it was to be shut out. How uncertain, even at the early age of seven years, was her right of domicile, appears from the fact that she was always liable to be turned out on the common stairs to make room for people with money in their pockets. "Being turned out on the common stair in the winter time," says the Prison Matron, "for late arrivals to tread upon or kick aside with an oath; for the police, always on the alert and in search of some one, to stumble over and remonstrate with, and insist upon the mother taking her indoors again; to be turned out again when the officials' backs were turned"—was what often befell the poor child, and such were the consequences which this procedure of "turning out of doors" primarily meant.

In the midst of this hideous agglomeration of crime, debauchery, and idleness, was found one tenement, like Lot's household in the midst of Sodom.

"In the New Vennel there lodged at that period one honest couple—only one honest pair—working hard and struggling for a subsistence in the midst of the crime that was seething round them. This couple consisted of a mat-maker and his wife, renting a room on the same floor as the Camerons—a couple who worked late at night and early in the morning at the mats which they hawked all day about the Glasgow streets." Hard-working, moral, industrious—if this kind but poverty-stricken couple had been religious also, their influence upon little Jenny Cameron might have been alike more powerful and enduring. As it was they pitied her, received her into their room as often as she was shut out on the common stairs by her mother, gave her good advice with a quiet and earnest iteration, and even quarrelled with that unnatural mother on her behalf—quarrels of a very serious sort, for the poor mat-maker's wife was beaten, and her clothes torn by the termagant. Finally, however, this little gleam from a better life was shut out. The mat-maker's business declined; all their self-denial and exertion could not make up the rent. They, in their turn, were put out on the common stairs, and their mats and stools, and other humble trumpery sold off. So Mr. and Mrs. Macvee vanished utterly, and the Vennel, Glasgow, and little Jenny Cameron saw their careworn faces no more.

In the constant companionship of precocious thieves and prostitutes, this wretched child was speedily introduced to "the streets." Perhaps the worst of the many evil influences that beset her was the dancing school or "Penny Skeel."

These penny dancing rooms had

their origin, we are told, in Liverpool, and to them half the girls, from ten years old and upwards, in poor Jenny's destitute and vicious level of society flock with the pennies they can beg, borrow, or steal.

Here, then, was what seemed to Jenny and her class something to dazzle, delight, and almost intoxicate —more genuine excitement and pleasure than the Belgravian belle finds in the west-end ball-room—"music, company, and a mad whirl of spirits." In this place she, like her fellows, was happy. The description of these resorts of Glasgow rascality is too minute and curious to be omitted :—

> "Entrance to these dancing skeels is generally by an unlighted close, up a common stairs, to a large room on the first floor. The door of this room—on which DANCING HERE is legibly inscribed—is kept by a scowling individual—probably the proprietor of the establishment, who receives the pennies of his young patrons, unlocks the door, admits them, and locks them in.
>
> "In this room, lighted by gas or candles, according to the taste or means of the proprietors, a hundred, or a hundred and fifty, are speedily assembled, ranged around the room on forms placed against the wall. They are of all ages, from the boy and girl of seven or eight years old, to the man and woman of two or three and twenty; but the majority are boys and girls averaging from twelve to fifteen years. The boys are chiefly apprentices or young thieves; the girls are of the usual poor class—more than usually poor, perhaps—three-fourths of them without shoes and stockings, and all of them bonnetless, as is usual among the Scotch girls. The boys are several degrees removed from clean, but the "lassies," as they are generally termed, are, without an exception, bright-faced, glossy-haired damsels, who have evidently been at no ordinary pains to render themselves attractive and presentable. Here and there is evident a little effort at finery, in the shape of a pair of ear-rings, or a necklace of sham coral, and their poor and scanty garments are, in many cases, destitute of any signs of raggedness."

Let us now see how these assemblies are conducted :—

> "The master of the ceremonies, carrying a fiddle or kit under his arm—(occasionally bag-pipes are substituted for the violin)—calls out the dance: in all cases a Scotch dance of the simplest character is chosen. The dancers are arranged, music is struck up, and the festivities begin with a hideous clatter of thick soles and heels from the masculine portion, and a soft pattering of naked feet from the majority of the feminine. There is much setting to partners, and an infinitude of solo performances, winding up with the usual twirling and twisting common to Scotch dances in general; and in the midst of all this heat, and dust, and bustle, the man sits perched above his scholars, fiddling rapidly, and glaring at them, like the evil genius of the place."

So far the "skeel" is the scene of a revel. We are now to view it in another aspect—its perverted, but by no means unnatural subserviency to crime. This demon musician, reminding one of the famous piper seen by Tam O'Shanter on the altar of "Kirk Alloway's auld haunted kirk," knows familiarly every face in the room.

> "To the elder girls who may have encouraged strangers there he is friendly, and fatherly, and watchful; he knows that before the evening is out the strangers will probably be robbed and there will be an uproar, and it may be necessary for some kind friend to turn the gas out or knock the candles over, and leave the entire company to grope their way down the common stair into the close; or the man at the door, who is a prizefighter by profession. will be called in to keep order, silence the remonstrants, or turn them out of the room. As a rule, the proprietor objects to robbery in the skeel itself, and has a room on the other side of the landing where such things may be conducted with greater ease, and save the skeel from falling into disrepute."

A few well-placed words, directed against these baleful institutions, deserve quotation here, both on account of the information they supply and the experience which enforces them :—

> "Night after night in those Scotch cities still goes on this hideous revelry; still are attracted girls and boys from their homes; still are engulfed the heedless youth of both sexes. Many innocent children of poor, even respectable parents are lured hither to imbibe a love for dancing and bad company. The apprentice robs to go there. The girl begs in the street, or thieves her way to admittance. Step by step to ruin, surely and swiftly, proceed these untaught, uncared-for children, and they are past hope and have left all childhood behind them at an age that is horrible to dwell upon.
>
> "Let us urge here the great importance of sweeping away these nurseries of crime at once. They are on the increase, and are working greater mischief daily. Surely there must be a law to expunge them from our cities. They must be evading the law by their very presence in our midst. There

is no difficulty in finding them; they are well known to every police officer. The evil that they do is incalculable. In Glasgow at the present moment, within a stone's throw of each other, are two of these vile places of amusement."

Here, before the age of twelve, Jane Cameron had her first "sweetheart." John Ewan, or "Cannie Jock," as he was called, a professional thief, though only two or three years her senior, was the object of her passion. "She was not twelve years of age when she thought herself a woman old enough to consider this lad her lover, one for whom she would go through fire or water, were the occasion necessary to stand by—in the face of all opposition from the mother in the New Vennel." In after-life, when he and she had been separated, she often wondered at this fascination, for even according to the thieves' standard he was undeserving—untrue to her, "a sneak," and unskilled in his evil art. Yet so it was.

Her profession was, of course, now a settled point; and though occasionally her one good adviser—now that poor Mrs. Macvee had vanished—"a kind-hearted detective," who saw and compassionated her among the polluted frequenters of the "skeel," would take the trouble to warn Jane of the way she was drifting, she had plenty of counsellors the other way, who sought to confirm her in her dangerous choice, and sooth her apprehensions. "Prison's naething," said Mary Loggie, her close friend and contemporary, who had herself made a trial of it; "they take care of ye, and gie ye eno' to eat—more than ye get at hame. There's naethin' to frighten ye a bit." The Prison Matron records this encouragement offered to a trembling probationer in the school of crime, in no harsh spirit, and apparently without seeing its bearing upon a great question. Those, however, who are for making imprisonment a recreation will do well to lay this evidence of the tendency of the system to heart.

Her lover was untrue to Jane, whose wild paroxysms of jealousy amaze one in a child of twelve. The Frazer lasses were the objects of his divided attentions, and to gain access to the "skeel," when she learned that he and they were at that moment possibly dancing together, was the object with which her first theft was committed. "Jane was desperate that night, and went into High-street like a young lioness, followed by the breathless Mary Loggie." After much debate the only resource available was to try her luck in a first essay at shop-lifting:—

"Jane, full of the perfidy of her juvenile lover, and buoyed up with the hope of confronting him at the 'skeel,' went suddenly into the shop, and took her place at the side of the two women deep in the purchase of a few trifling articles. The shopkeeper glanced at Jane, and then resumed his attentions to the earlier arrivals. The cheap goods that had been examined were within handy reach of Cameron: 'if he would only turn his face for a moment and forget them!' thought the child, with a heart which throbbed fearfully with the excitement of the first experiment. 'I thought my heart would burst,' was her comment on this incident, 'I was sae afeard o' bein' foond oot—naethin' else. I didna think o' anythin' but my Johnnie dancing with the Frazers, and if I could only get at the ribbons or the gloves and mak' awa' wi' them!' She forgot Mary Loggie's injunction to sweep something off the counter with her elbow; she was anxious to secure a roll of ribbon. 'It was narrow blue ribbon with a silver edging—I can see it now,' was her remark. It was very handy to her grasp, if the shopkeeper's vigilance would only relax for an instant. And it did relax—the man turned aside, and Jane slid the ribbon off the counter, and stood holding it in her hand whilst trembling at the boldness of the crime which she had committed.

"'When I had got it, I did not ken what to do wi' it,' she related. 'I stood all stupid like, holding it in my hand behind me. If he had only looked at me, he would have guessed at ance that I had stolen somethin'.'

"But the man suspected nothing, and, before he had turned round, Jane felt the ribbon taken softly from her hand by Mary Loggie. How to get out of the shop herself was now her perplexity. She stood revolving in her mind what to ask for—what it was possible to ask for which the man possessed not. When he turned round she feared that he would miss the little blue roll of ribbon and charge her with the theft, and her knees continued to knock together with fright. The suspense of waiting was too much for her, and she asked at last, whilst the man was speaking to his customers, if he had any gloves as low as three halfpence a pair; a wild question, which the man answered by a sharp 'no,' and left Jane with an excuse to retire. He looked along the counter again, missing not the ribbon, but drawing the other articles, with which it was strewn, nearer to him, as if by instinct, and Jane crept slowly, painfully out of the shop, as though there were leaden weights at her heels. In the street she flew like a mad thing down the nearest close, and made her way towards the dancing school, expecting to meet Mary Loggie at the door thereof."

There is a curious and dramatic episode concerning this Mary Loggie, the companion, the tempter, and, in her strange way, the friend of Jane Cameron. It so happened that these two girls were alternately several times imprisoned, so that their close intimacy was a good deal interrupted. When Jane Cameron emerged upon one of these occasions she found that her friend Mary had disappeared from her accustomed haunts. Her family and friends took the matter easily. There was little curiosity and less interest about her. She had written to tell Jane, while in prison, that she had left her old ways and married a carpenter, and the letter seemed to intimate a sort of farewell. It seemed improbable, and Jane did not know whether to believe it. She could learn nothing of her from her former associates, and she had given up the idea of discovering anything more about her; when one morning, in the depth of winter, about four months after her discharge from prison, she met Mary Loggie, on Hutcheson's-bridge.

"Jane had strayed that way in a listless fashion. She had had a headache from deep drinking yesternight, and had ventured forth in search of fresh air, when she came face to face with the old friend. The old friend was well but plainly dressed, and there was so quiet and *new* a look upon her face, that Jane did not recognise her until she had passed her. When she had gone by, Jane felt a little aggrieved at the "cut direct," and turned and looked after her. Mary Loggie had increased her pace, as though she had been afraid of Jane following her; but Cameron merely stood on the pavement, and gazed at the receding figure of her whom she had liked best in the world. At this moment Mary Loggie looked over her shoulder, paused, and then turned and came rapidly back.

"'Jennie!'

"'Mary!'

"Jennie shook the outstretched hand of the past friend, and continued to stare at the transformation before her.

"'It's a' true then, Mary?'

"'That I'm married? Ay!'

"'How did ye manage it? How was it that ye dropped into luck's way like that, and got a raal honest man to marry ye?'

"Coom this wa' ower the bridge, and let me talk to ye a bit?'"

Then Mary told the story, which is worth repeating.

"Whilst Jane Cameron was serving her time at Glasgow Prison, Mary Loggie had taken to cotton-spinning again—hands had been wanted. The trade of thieving had been slack, and Mary joined the mill hands. Here she became acquainted with a poor little factory-girl—a delicate child of ten or eleven years of age. This child fainted away one day in the mill, and after recovering from her stupor, was too ill to continue her work for the day. Mary accompanied the child, who was still very faint, to her mother's house—whereat was lodging at that period the carpenter who took a sudden fancy to Mary. The carpenter was out of work, and at home; and a conversation ensued between him and Mary before the latter went back to the mill. He was a middle-aged Englishman, who had recently crossed the Tweed in search of better fortune; and he had hoped in Glasgow to find some distant relatives, who, however, had contrived to elude his search. Mary was a native of Glasgow, and might recollect some one of the name; and Mary recollected one or two people in the city who bore the very name which he had been anxious to discover."

Next day the carpenter met her coming from the mill, whither he had gone to thank her for her information which had conducted him to a second-cousin, who promised in a week or two to find work for him.

"So the intimacy commenced, and Mr. Simmons, the carpenter, began to cross Mary Loggie's path with a suspicious frequency. Mary did not understand it for a while; he was a plain, matter-of-fact man, who paid no compliments, and put one or two awkward questions to Mary that were difficult to answer. One day he asked her where she was living—how she managed to live on the money earned at the cotton-mill. Mary told him that she went shares in one room down a close, and that she had no relations in the world. When he informed her that he was a widower, and had had one little child, who had died before it was five years old, Mary began to suspect that he had taken a fancy to her; and when he asked her one afternoon if she would go to church with him next Sunday, she felt ready to burst out crying, with a strange, new sense of happiness."

So they were married—he suspecting nothing, she avoiding her "auld acquaintance" with a sort of terror, But she had confidence in Jane Cameron, and was proud of her happy position in life; and so, with a strange rashness in one so trained in caution—there being "nothing to fear, her husband would not be home till one o'clock"—Mary invited her old "pal" in to see her "bonny hoose."

"Mary opened the door with her key, and the two old "pals" went upstairs to the room on the first floor—a large room, forming bedroom, parlour, and all, plainly furnished, but in its size and general appearance, a palace to the astonished eyes of Cameron."

Mrs. Simmons née Loggie exhibited all her treasures of furniture—pots and pans, her best china tea-things, her Sunday gown, for "Kirk"—and expatiated upon her comforts. The place was indeed, in cleanliness and dimensions, a palace compared with the miserable den she had been accustomed to inhabit.

"'It's na like the Vennel.'

"'Naethin' like it—naethin.'

"Jane's description of this new 'hoose,' of her feelings at the sight of it, of the envy that stole into her heart and disturbed her equanimity; I should have liked to set down in her own broad Scotch accent. It affords an insight into that natural character which adverse circumstances had warped and disturbed.

"She felt as if she would have liked to have had a good cry at Mary's luck—then aggrieved that Mary should have attained to such an eminence above her, and been made an honest woman by doing so little to deserve it. There was a lump in her throat which she thought would suffocate her, and her knees knocked together in a strange manner that was altogether unaccountable. Here was a contrast between honesty and vice; and she felt how far she had drifted away from all that was good and praiseworthy, and how past praying and hoping for she was.

"Still Jane Cameron was not an envious girl; and the first pangs over, her evil temper subsided, and she congratulated Mary in her own fashion, and Mary, who had strangely altered for the better, laughed and cried, told Jane of her fears lest the truth should escape, and her husband turn her out of doors, spoke of her love for this confiding, hardworking, earnest man, whom she was trying to deserve by a new and exemplary life."

In the midst of these confidences, and poor Mary's display of her household treasures—

"Mr. Simmons came home ten minutes before his time, and found a Glasgie lassie sitting on the edge of a chair, talking to his young wife.

"'That's his step,' Mary had said. 'My God, Jennie, sit ye still, and say naething, or it's a' up wi' me!'"

Terror lest her old friend should be ruined was now the only feeling in Jane Cameron's breast. She would have done or said anything to save her. "I felt," she said, while relating the adventure, "it was a narro' squeak then, and my heart beat unco' fast."

"Mr. Simmons entered—a middle-aged man with a fierce expression of countenance, with iron-grey whiskers, and eyes that were very sharp and piercing—and looked hard at Jane Cameron, who rose, and in her embarrassment, dropped a courtesy—the courtesy which she had been accustomed to make in Glasgow prison to the governor, chaplain, head warder, matron, and all visitors.

"The carpenter stared at Jane's respectful demeanour, and then turned to his wife, who was standing by the mantelpiece looking as white as a ghost.

"This is Jennie Smith, who used to work wi' me at the cotton mill, John.'

"'How do you do, Miss Smith?' he said, nodding toward her. 'Sit down, my lass—you're welcome.'"

Jane, however, notwithstanding the unsuspecting urgency of his invitation, got away as quickly as she could; and at the door, Mary, who had followed her, and was still white with horror at the jeopardy in which she stood, caught her by the arm, and said—"'Dinna coom again, Jennie; dinna ken me ony mair, or I shall gae mad. Dinna tell ane that ye hae met me today.'"

A month after this, one Saturday night, Mr. Simmons was walking up the Bridge-gate when he met Jane Cameron face to face, and instantly recognised her. She was embarrassed, and at the moment was walking with one of her worst companions, Ann Ryan, who was dressed "Glasgie fashion" with a shawl over her head.

"About both girls there was something suspicious that evening—their hair was glossy with pomatum, their cheeks had a tinge of artificial colouring, and there was a boldness in their looks telling unmistakably of the cruel life of the streets.

"Mr Simmons stared at Jane, and then stopped, saying 'Jennie Smith!'

"Jane stammered out 'Mr. Simmons,' and asked for Mary.

"'She's quite well. Where are you going so late at night?'

"'Only a little way.'"

Ann Ryan, however, accosted him in a style perfectly in keeping with the appearance they both presented, and the carpenter's suspicions being now effectually aroused, he crossed the street, keeping them in view, and obtained from a policeman a true and astounding relation of Jennie Cameron's adventures, occupation, character, and name. He went home and cross-examined his horrified wife, but still keeping his worst suspicions in the background.

Piece by piece, he gathered, from others, the whole history of Jane Cameron—worse than that, the whole past history of Mary Loggie; and then he sought Cameron again, and asked her to come with him to see Mary. When they entered the room together poor Mary "dropped down in a chair by the fireside and stared at them."

"'I never saw in my life before sic a luke as hers,' commented Jane Cameron long afterwards upon the scene.

"'This woman's name is Cameron—let her deny it if she can now?' he said on entering.

"'I dinna deny it,' said Jane defiantly.

"'And she was a bad character when you knew her, Mary, and you knew that too, and was a bad one yourself. There, that's the truth, and you can't say no to it.'

"Mary wrung her hands and looked piteously towards her husband. There was no sympathy with her alarm, and she turned on Jane like a fury.

"'Ye hae doon this—ye hae told him a', ye jealous, wicked woman; ye hae turned against me, because ye could na bear ane to live honest, or be anythin' but the thief I was before I married him.'

"'I hae said naething,' screamed Jane, anxious to put Mary on her guard against self-confession; 'I knew naething. I hae ony come hither 'cause he asked me, Mary.'

"'But I know all; don't let us have any lies,' said he roughly. After a while he turned to his wife, saying—

"'Mary, I took you for an honest girl, and married you. If I had known what you had been all your life—a thief, and worse—I would have blown my brains out first. You led me to believe that you were a good girl, and made me play the fool and marry you. You've disgraced me, and you must go!'

"'Oh! John, John, dinna say that!'

"Mary flung herself on her knees before him, and clasped his legs round with her arms; she begged him to hear her; she prayed him to believe that she loved him very dearly, and had been living an upright life ever since she had known him. She told her whole story between her choking sobs, and called God to witness how she had lived only for him, thought only of him since their marriage; how the secret of her guilty life had preyed upon her, because she feared to tell him the whole truth.

"'You are in league with this girl still?' said Simmons in reply to this.

"Cameron took a fearful oath on the spot, that they had only met once by chance on Hutcheson's-bridge, and that Mary had made her promise never to see her again. Cameron, in tears, too, moved by this scene as she had never before been moved in her life, pleaded for the old friend until he bade her be silent—he did not want to hear her speak again.

"Mary Loggie continued to plead like one whose life was at stake. She had had a glimpse of a new existence, and fought hard not to be hurled back to the old; she swore to be always true and faithful to him, and keep away from such as Jane for ever; she lay on the floor at last and moaned for mercy at his feet. The fate of Mary's future trembled in the balance, but the man had a generous heart, and was moved by his wife's pleading. He was a poor man, with not over-refined feelings, and she had been a help, even a comfort to him. Before the discovery they had lived very happily together, and it did seem hard to cast her back to the streets. When he was convinced that Mary had wished to keep away from all who belonged to the past, he softened, and at last he told her to get up and give over crying—he would not say any more about it—he would try her.

"'You can go as soon as you like,' he said to Cameron, and Jane went down stairs wondrously relieved in mind to know that it had all ended satisfactorily.

"So the romance ended; and it is to be trusted that Mary made Simmons a good wife. Jane believed that she did; acting on her belief, I think so too. Jane saw her again once or twice in the Glasgow streets, but Mary had always turned her head away when they met and hurried past for her life.

"'I was too bad for her,' said Jane in this place, 'and I dare say her heart was gude eno' to speak, if I had wished, which I didn't for her ain sake.'"

Jane Cameron's next love—Cannie Jock having absconded—was a thieves' hero. He had made his reputation in London, which as it establishes that of an actor or an author had "made" this man. "He was a thieves' modern Jack Sheppard; he had *earned* thousands of pounds in his day; he was clever as a burglar, and he was inimitable as a garotter. He had broken out of gaol twice, and this feat of prison-breaking was the nimbus of glory round his head." Black Barney, his appellation in these pages, was a lady's man, and his wooing is worth recording. He had, no doubt, excellent reasons for his quitting London just then, and to these, be they what they might, the profession in the provinces owed the privilege of beholding the "star:"—

> "Barney was a man of sudden fancies, even eccentric tastes. Though there were many prettier girls in the room, he devoted himself to Jane Cameron, till some jokes, more forcible than select, at his preference showered upon him from all sides. Still Barney loved a jest, and was not to be laughed out of his preference, and Jane was elated at her victory, and took no heed of invidious comments. The lion of the night was a low-browed, villanous fellow, short, thick-set, and with one shoulder higher than the other; but he was the clever thief who had made money, and been more than commonly successful; and that we are valued according to our success rather than our merit, a writer of old days has observed very satirically, but very truthfully.
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> "Therefore Jane Cameron may be said to have fallen in love with this successful scoundrel. He singled her out and flattered her, and Jane's head was turned on the instant. She felt that she could go through fire and water, even die for him, if need were. If she were lucky enough to secure him for a companion she would consider herself the happiest woman in the world —happier than even Mary Loggie, who had so fine a home of her own! She did her best to captivate this hero; she was a quick-witted girl, with a certain amount of humour; she had a good voice, she could dance well, she was young and rather pretty, and the "lion," Barney, was smitten by the Scotch lassie.
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> "Matches between thieves are soon struck up, and generally known. Barney's choice was avowed, and Barney's choice respected from that time forth."

With this man Jane consorted until their joint perpetration of the crime for which she was tried, and received her last sentence, separated them finally. Together they effected, in a sort of masquerade in a railway train, a robbery which placed them in possession of a gold watch and chain, and more than a hundred pounds in bank-notes and gold. With this they resolved on "a holiday," and away they went, as lady and gentleman, to London, where they lived like princes, and visited a different theatre every night; but, determined to enjoy themselves thoroughly, never once attempted a stroke of "business" during this frolic, which, however, terminated in a ludicrous way, by Black Barney's pocket being picked by a clever brother of the craft of every farthing of their store. He, however, was expert and shifty, and repaired his loss by the exercise of his profession, sufficiently to enable them to return to Glasgow, where—in their room, to which Jane inveigled an unwary sea captain—was committed by her partner that "robbery with violence," which very nearly amounted to murder; and which consigned her for many years to penal servitude. In estimating Jane's character, however, it must be borne in mind, that she was as much horror-stricken, probably, as the victim himself, when Black Barney, declining to rely on the effect of the drug which had half "dazed" him, felled him to the earth with a night protector, and repeated his blow as he lay there.

The account of this poor woman's love of her dying baby, for she had one in her precocious girlhood; of her devotion to the Prison Matron, who had spoken kindly to her; of her wild, tender, and most grateful and affectionate nature; of her strange but inflexible honesty; her pride, daring, and good-nature; her struggles against her habits, and ultimate establishment in an honest way of life; her agonized parting with the Matron, who had been her first real friend; and her early death, not a break-up, but a gradual subsidence of the vital powers, in a strange land, but among kind and Christian people, complete one of the most singular and touching pictures of human nature, strength and weakness, sorrow and hope, which has yet been studied by the psychologist and the moralist. The book gives us at once higher and lower notions of the class from which Jane Cameron was taken, and is on the whole one of the most peculiar and powerful we have ever happened to light upon.

WICKED CAPTAIN WALSHAWE, OF WAULING.

CHAPTER I.

PEG O'NEILL PAYS THE CAPTAIN'S DEBTS.

A VERY odd thing happened to my uncle, Mr. Watson, of Haddlestone; and to enable you to understand it, I must begin at the beginning.

In the year 1822, Mr. James Walshawe, more commonly known as Captain Walshawe, died at the age of eighty-one years. The Captain in his early days, and so long as health and strength permitted, was a scamp of the active, intriguing sort; and spent his days and nights in sowing his wild oats, of which he seemed to have an inexhaustible stock. The harvest of this tillage was plentifully interspersed with thorns, nettles, and thistles, which stung the husbandman unpleasantly, and did not enrich him.

Captain Walshawe was very well known in the neighbourhood of Wauling, and very generally avoided there. A "captain" by courtesy, for he had never reached that rank in the army list. He had quitted the service in 1766, at the age of twenty-five; immediately previous to which period his debts had grown so troublesome, that he was induced to extricate himself by running away with and marrying an heiress.

Though not so wealthy quite as he had imagined, she proved a very comfortable investment for what remained of his shattered affections; and he lived and enjoyed himself very much in his old way, upon her income, getting into no end of scrapes and scandals, and a good deal of debt and money trouble.

When he married his wife, he was quartered in Ireland, at Clonmel, where was a nunnery, in which, as pensioner, resided Miss O'Neill, or as she was called in the country, Peg O'Neill—the heiress of whom I have spoken.

Her situation was the only ingredient of romance in the affair, for the young lady was decidedly plain, though good-humoured looking, with that style of features which is termed *potato;* and in figure she was a little too plump, and rather short. But she was impressible; and the handsome young English Lieutenant was too much for her monastic tendencies, and she eloped.

In England there are traditions of Irish fortune-hunters, and in Ireland of English. The fact is, it was the vagrant class of each country that chiefly visited the other in old times; and a handsome vagabond, whether at home or abroad, I suppose, made the most of his face, which was also his fortune.

At all events, he carried off the fair one from the sanctuary; and for some sufficient reason, I suppose, they took up their abode at Wauling, in Lancashire.

Here the gallant captain amused himself after his fashion, sometimes running up, of course on business, to London. I believe few wives have ever cried more in a given time than did that poor, dumpy, potato-faced heiress, who got over the nunnery garden wall, and jumped into the handsome Captain's arms, for love.

He spent her income, frightened her out of her wits with oaths and threats, and broke her heart.

Latterly she shut herself up pretty nearly altogether in her room. She had an old, rather grim, Irish servant-woman in attendance upon her. This domestic was tall, lean, and religious, and the Captain knew instinctively she hated him; and he hated her in return, and often threatened to put her out of the house, and sometimes even to kick her out of the window. And whenever a wet day confined him to the house, or the stable, and he grew tired of smoking, he would begin to swear and curse at her for a *diddled* old mischief-maker, that could never be easy, and was always troubling the house with her cursed stories, and soforth.

But years passed away, and old Molly Doyle remained still in her original position. Perhaps he thought that there must be somebody there, and that he was not, after all, very likely to change for the better.

CHAPTER II.

THE BLESSED CANDLE.

He tolerated another intrusion, too, and thought himself a paragon of patience and easy good-nature for so doing. A Roman Catholic clergyman, in a long black frock, with a low standing collar, and a little white muslin fillet round his neck—tall, sallow, with blue chin, and dark steady eyes—used to glide up and down the stairs, and through the passages; and the Captain sometimes met him in one place and sometimes in another. But by a caprice incident to such tempers he treated this cleric exceptionally, and even with a surly sort of courtesy, though he grumbled about his visits behind his back.

I do not know that he had a great deal of moral courage, and the ecclesiastic looked severe and self-possessed; and somehow he thought he had no good opinion of him, and if a natural occasion were offered, might say extremely unpleasant things, and hard to be answered.

Well the time came at last, when poor Peg O'Neill—in an evil hour Mrs. James Walshawe—must cry, and quake, and pray her last. The doctor came from Penlynden, and was just as vague as usual, but more gloomy, and for about a week came and went oftener. The cleric in the long black frock was also daily there. And at last came that last sacrament in the gates of death, when the sinner is traversing those dread steps that never can be retraced; when the face is turned for ever from life, and we see a receding shape, and hear a voice already irrevocably in the land of spirits.

So the poor lady died; and some people said the Captain "felt it very much." I don't think he did. But he was not very well just then, and looked the part of mourner and penitent to admiration—being seedy and sick. He drank a great deal of brandy and water that night, and called in Farmer Dobbs, for want of better company, to drink with him; and told him all his grievances, and how happy he and "the poor lady up-stairs" might have been, had it not been for liars, and pick-thanks, and tale-bearers, and the like, who came between them—meaning Molly Doyle—whom, as he waxed eloquent over his liquor, he came at last to curse and rail at by name, with more than his accustomed freedom. And he described his own natural character and amiability in such moving terms, that he wept maudlin tears of sensibility over his theme; and when Dobbs was gone, drank some more grog, and took to railing and cursing again by himself; and then mounted the stairs unsteadily, to see "what the devil Doyle and the other —— old witches were about in poor Peg's room."

When he pushed open the door, he found some half-dozen crones, chiefly Irish, from the neighbouring town of Hackleton, sitting over tea and snuff, &c., with candles lighted round the corpse, which was arrayed in a strangely cut robe of brown serge. She had secretly belonged to some order—I think the Carmelite, but I am not certain—and wore the habit in her coffin.

"What the d—— are you doing with my wife?" cried the Captain, rather thickly. "How dare you dress her up in this —— trumpery, you—you cheating old witch; and what's that candle doing in her hand?"

I think he was a little startled, for the spectacle was grisly enough. The dead lady was arrayed in this strange brown robe, and in her rigid fingers, as in a socket, with the large wooden beads and cross wound round it, burned a wax candle, shedding its white light over the sharp features of the corpse. Moll Doyle was not to be put down by the Captain, whom she hated, and accordingly, in her phrase, "he got as good as he gave." And the Captain's wrath waxed fiercer, and he chucked the wax taper from the dead hand, and was on the point of flinging it at the old serving-woman's head.

"The holy candle, you sinner!" cried she.

"I've a mind to make you eat it, you beast," cried the Captain.

But I think he had not known before what it was, for he subsided a little sulkily, and he stuffed his hand with the candle (quite extinct by this time) into his pocket, and said he—

"You know devilish well you had no business going on with y-y-your d—— *witch*-craft about my poor wife, without my leave—you do—and you'll please to take off that d—— brown pinafore, and get her decently into her coffin, and I'll pitch your devil's waxlight into the sink."

And the Captain stalked out of the room.

"An' now her poor sowl's in prison, you wretch, be the mains o' ye; an' may yer own be shut into the wick o' that same candle, till it's burned out, ye savage."

"I'd have you ducked for a witch, for two-pence," roared the Captain up the staircase, with his hand on the banisters, standing on the lobby. But the door of the chamber of death clapped angrily, and he went down to the parlour, where he examined the holy candle for a while, with a tipsy gravity, and then with something of that reverential feeling for the symbolic, which is not uncommon in rakes and scamps, he thoughtfully locked it up in a press, where were accumulated all sorts of obsolete rubbish—soiled packs of cards, disused tobacco-pipes, broken powder-flasks, his military sword, and a dusky bundle of the "Flash Songster," and other questionable literature.

He did not trouble the dead lady's room any more. Being a volatile man it is probable that more cheerful plans and occupations began to entertain his fancy.

CHAPTER III.

MY UNCLE WATSON VISITS WAULING.

So the poor lady was buried decently, and Captain Walshawe reigned alone for many years at Wauling. He was too shrewd and too experienced by this time to run violently down the steep hill that leads to ruin. So there was a method in his madness; and after a widowed career of more than forty years, he, too, died at last with some guineas in his purse.

Forty years and upwards is a great *edax rerum*, and a wonderful chemical power. It acted forcibly upon the gay Captain Walshawe. Gout supervened, and was no more conducive to temper than to enjoyment, and made his elegant hands lumpy at all the small joints, and turned them slowly into crippled claws. He grew stout when his exercise was interfered with, and ultimately almost corpulent. He suffered from what Mr. Holloway calls "bad legs," and was wheeled about in a great leathern-backed chair, and his infirmities went on accumulating with his years.

I am sorry to say, I never heard that he repented, or turned his thoughts seriously to the future. On the contrary, his talk grew fouler, and his fun ran upon his favourite sins, and his temper waxed more truculent. But he did not sink into dotage. Considering his bodily infirmities, his energies and his malignities, which were many and active, were marvellously little abated by time. So he went on to the close. When his temper was stirred, he cursed and swore in a way that made decent people tremble. It was a word and a blow with him; the latter, luckily, not very sure now. But he would seize his crutch and make a swoop or a pound at the offender, or shy his medicine-bottle, or his tumbler, at his head.

It was a peculiarity of Captain Walshawe that he, by this time, hated nearly everybody. My uncle, Mr. Watson, of Haddlestone, was cousin to the Captain, and his heir-at-law. But my uncle had lent him money on mortgage of his estates, and there had been a treaty to sell, and terms and a price were agreed upon, in "articles" which the lawyers said were still in force.

I think the ill-conditioned Captain bore him a grudge for being richer than he, and would have liked to do him an ill turn. But it did not lie in his way; at least while he was living.

My Uncle Watson was a Methodist, and what they call a "class-leader;" and, on the whole, a very good man. He was now near fifty—grave, as beseemed his profession—somewhat dry—and a little severe, perhaps—but a just man.

A letter from the Penlynden doctor reached him at Haddlestone, announcing the death of the wicked old Captain; and suggesting his attendance at the funeral, and the expediency of his being on the spot to look after things at Wauling. The reasonableness of this striking my good uncle, he made his journey to the old house in Lancashire incontinently, and reached in time for the funeral.

My Uncle, whose traditions of the Captain were derived from his mother, who remembered him in his slim, handsome youth—in shorts, cocked-hat and lace, was amazed at the bulk of the coffin which contained his mortal remains; but the lid being already screwed down, he did not see the face of the bloated old sinner.

CHAPTER IV.

IN THE PARLOUR.

WHAT I relate, I had from the lips of my Uncle, who was a truthful man, and not prone to fancies.

The day turning out awfully rainy and tempestuous, he persuaded the doctor and the attorney to remain for the night at Wauling.

There was no will—the attorney was sure of that; for the Captain's enmities were perpetually shifting, and he could never quite make up his mind, as to how best to give effect to a malignity whose direction was being constantly modified. He had had instructions for drawing a will a dozen times over. But the process had always been arrested by the intending testator.

Search being made, no will was found. The papers, indeed were all right, with one important exception, the leases were nowhere to be seen. There were special circumstances connected with several of the principal tenancies on the estate—unnecessary here to detail—which rendered the loss of these documents one of very serious moment, and even of very obvious danger.

My Uncle, therefore, searched strenuously. The attorney was at his elbow, and the doctor helped with a suggestion now and then. The old serving-man seemed an honest deaf creature, and really knew nothing.

My Uncle Watson was very much perturbed. He fancied—but this possibly was only fancy—that he had detected for a moment a queer look in the attorney's face; and from that instant it became fixed in his mind that he knew all about the leases. Mr. Watson expounded that evening in the parlour to the doctor, the attorney, and the deaf servant. Ananias and Sapphira figured in the foreground; and the awful nature of fraud and theft, or tampering in anywise with the plain rule of honesty in matters pertaining to estates, &c., were pointedly dwelt upon; and then came a long and strenuous prayer, in which he entreated with fervour and aplomb that the hard heart of the sinner who had abstracted the leases might be softened or broken in such a way as to lead to their restitution; or that, if he continued reserved and contumacious, it might at least be the will of Heaven to bring him to public justice and the documents to light. The fact is, that he was praying all this time at the attorney.

When these religious exercises were over, the visiters retired to their rooms, and my Uncle Watson wrote two or three pressing letters by the fire. When his task was done, it had grown late; the candles were flaring in their sockets, and all in bed, and, I suppose, asleep, but he.

The fire was nearly out, he chilly, and the flame of the candles throbbing strangely in their sockets shed alternate glare and shadow round the old wainscoted room and its quaint furniture. Outside were the wild thunder and piping of the storm; and the rattling of distant windows sounded through the passages, and down the stairs, like angry people astir in the house.

My Uncle Watson belonged to a sect who by no means reject the supernatural, and whose founder, on the contrary, has sanctioned ghosts in the most emphatic way. He was glad therefore to remember, that in prosecuting his search that day, he had seen some six inches of wax candle in the press in the parlour; for he had no fancy to be overtaken by darkness in his present situation. He had no time to lose; and taking the bunch of keys—of which he was now master—he soon fitted the lock, and secured the candle—a treasure in his circumstances; and lighting it, he stuffed it into the socket of one of the expiring candles, and extinguishing the other, he looked round the room in the steady light reassured. At the same moment, an unusually violent gust of the storm blew a handful of gravel against the parlour window, with a sharp rattle that startled him in the midst of the roar and hubbub; and the flame of the candle itself was agitated by the air.

CHAPTER V.

THE BED-CHAMBER.

My Uncle walked up to bed, guarding his candle with his hand, for the lobby windows were rattling furiously, and he disliked the idea of being left in the dark more than ever.

His bedroom was comfortable, though old-fashioned. He shut and bolted the door. There was a tall looking-glass opposite the foot of his four-poster, on the dressing-table between the windows. He tried to make the curtains meet, but they would not draw; and like many a gentleman in a like perplexity, he did not possess a pin, nor was there one in the huge pincushion beneath the glass.

He turned the face of the mirror away therefore, so that its back was presented to the bed, pulled the curtains together, and placed a chair against them, to prevent their falling open again. There was a good fire, and a reinforcement of round coal and wood inside the fender. So he piled it up to ensure a cheerful blaze through the night, and placing a little black mahogany table, with the legs of a Satyr, beside the bed, and his candle upon it, he got between the sheets, and laid his red night-capped head upon his pillow, and disposed himself to sleep.

The first thing that made him uncomfortable was a sound at the foot of his bed, quite distinct in a momentary lull of the storm. It was only the gentle rustle and rush of the curtains, which fell open again; and as his eyes opened, he saw them resuming their perpendicular dependence, and sat up in his bed almost expecting to see something uncanny in the aperture.

There was nothing, however, but the dressing-table, and other dark furniture, and the window-curtains faintly undulating in the violence of the storm. He did not care to get up, therefore—the fire being bright and cheery—to replace the curtains by a chair, in the position in which he had left them, anticipating possibly a new recurrence of the relapse which had startled him from his incipient doze.

So he got to sleep in a little while again, but he was disturbed by a sound, as he fancied, at the table on which stood the candle. He could not say what it was, only that he wakened with a start, and lying so in some amaze, he did distinctly hear a sound which startled him a good deal, though there was nothing necessarily supernatural in it. He described it as resembling what would occur if you fancied a thinnish table-leaf, with a convex warp in it, depressed the reverse way, and suddenly with a spring recovering its natural convexity. It was a loud, sudden thump, which made the heavy candlestick jump, and there was an end, except that my uncle did not get again into a doze for ten minutes at least.

The next time he awoke, it was in that odd, serene way that sometimes occurs. We open our eyes, we know not why, quite placidly, and are on the instant wide awake. He had had a nap of some duration this time, for his candle-flame was fluttering and flaring, *in articulo*, in the silver socket. But the fire was still bright and cheery; so he popped the extinguisher on the socket, and almost at the same time there came a tap at his door, and a sort of crescendo "hush-sh-sh!" Once more my Uncle was sitting up, scared and perturbed, in his bed. He recollected, however, that he had bolted his door; and such inveterate materialists are we in the midst of our spiritualism, that this reassured him, and he breathed a deep sigh, and began to grow tranquil. But after a rest of a minute or two, there came a louder and sharper knock at his door; so that instinctively he called out, "Who's there?" in a loud, stern key. There was no sort of response, however. The nervous effect of the start subsided; and I think my uncle must have remembered how constantly, especially on a stormy night, these creaks or cracks which simulate all manner of goblin noises, make themselves naturally audible.

CHAPTER VI.

THE EXTINGUISHER IS LIFTED.

After a while, then, he lay down with his back turned toward that side of the bed at which was the door, and his face toward the table on which stood the massive old candlestick capped with its extinguisher, and in that position he closed his eyes. But sleep would not revisit them. All kinds of queer fancies began to trouble him—some of them I remember.

He felt the point of a finger, he averred, pressed most distinctly on the tip of his great toe, as if a living hand were between his sheets, and making a sort of signal of attention or silence. Then again he felt something as large as a rat make a sudden bounce in the middle of his bolster, just under his head. Then a voice said "oh!" very gently, close at the back of his head. All these things he felt certain of, and yet investigation led to nothing. He felt odd little cramps stealing now and then about him; and then, on a sudden, the middle finger of his right hand was plucked backwards, with a light playful jerk that frightened him awfully.

Meanwhile the storm kept singing, and howling, and ha-ha-hooing hoarsely among the limbs of the old trees and the chimney-pots; and my Uncle Watson, although he prayed and meditated as was his wont when he lay awake, felt his heart throb excitedly, and sometimes thought he was beset with evil spirits, and at others that he was in the early stage of a fever.

He resolutely kept his eyes closed, however, and, like St. Paul's shipwrecked companions, wished for the day. At last another little doze seems to have stolen upon his senses, for he awoke quietly and completely as before—opening his eyes all at once, and seeing everything as if he had not slept for a moment.

The fire was still blazing redly—nothing uncertain in the light—the massive silver candlestick, topped with its tall extinguisher, stood on the centre of the black mahogany table as before; and, looking by what seemed a sort of accident to the apex of this, he beheld something which made him quite misdoubt the evidence of his eyes.

He saw the extinguisher lifted by a tiny hand, from beneath, and a small human face, no bigger than a thumb-nail, with nicely proportioned features peep from beneath it. In this Lilliputian countenance was such a ghastly consternation as horrified my Uncle unspeakably. Out came a little foot then and there, and a pair of wee legs, in short silk stockings and buckled shoes, then the rest of the figure; and, with the arms holding about the socket, the little legs stretched and stretched, hanging about the stem of the candlestick till the feet reached the base, and so down the Satyr-like leg of the table, till they reached the floor, extending elastically, and strangely enlarging in all proportions as they approached the ground, where the feet and buckles were those of a well-shaped, full-grown man, and the figure tapering upward until it dwindled to its original fairy dimensions at the top, like an object seen in some strangely curved mirror.

Standing upon the floor he expanded, my amazed uncle could not tell how, into his proper proportions; and stood pretty nearly in profile at the bed side, a handsome and elegantly shaped young man, in a by-gone military costume, with a small laced three-cocked hat and plume on his head, but looking like a man going to be hanged—in unspeakable despair.

He stepped lightly to the hearth, and turned for a few seconds very dejectedly with his back toward the bed and the mantel-piece, and he saw the hilt of his rapier glittering in the fire-light; and then walking across the room he placed himself at the dressing-table, visible through the divided curtains at the foot of the bed. The fire was blazing still so brightly that my uncle saw him as distinctly as if half-a-dozen candles were burning.

CHAPTER VII.

THE VISITATION CULMINATES.

THE looking-glass was an old-fashioned piece of furniture, and had a drawer beneath it. My Uncle had searched it carefully for the papers in the day-time; but the silent figure pulled the drawer quite out, pressed a spring at the side, disclosing a false receptacle behind it, and from this he drew a parcel of papers tied together with pink tape.

All this time my uncle was staring at him in a horrified state, neither winking nor breathing, and the apparition had not once given the smallest intimation of consciousness that a living person was in the same room. But now, for the first time, it turned its livid stare full upon my uncle with a hateful smile of significance, lifting up the little parcel of papers between his slender finger and thumb. Then he made a long, cunning wink at him, and seemed to blow out one of his cheeks in a burlesque grimace, which, but for the horrific circumstances, would have been ludicrous. My Uncle could not tell whether this was really an intentional distortion or only one of those horrid ripples and deflections which were constantly disturbing the proportions of the figure, as if it were seen through some unequal and perverting medium.

The figure now approached the bed, seeming to grow exhausted and malignant as it did so. My Uncle's terror nearly culminated at this point, for he believed it was drawing near him with an evil purpose. But it was not so; for the soldier, over whom twenty years seemed to have passed in his brief transit to the dressing-table and back again, threw himself into a great high-backed arm-chair of stuffed leather at the far side of the fire, and placed his heels on the fender. His feet and legs seemed indistinctly to swell, and swathings showed themselves round them, and they grew into something enormous, and the upper figure swayed and shaped itself into corresponding proportions, a great mass of corpulence, with a cadaverous and malignant face, and the furrows of a great old age, and colourless glassy eyes; and with these changes, which came indefinitely but rapidly as those of a sunset cloud, the fine regimentals faded away, and a loose, gray, woollen drapery, somehow, was there in its stead; and all seemed to be stained and rotten, for swarms of worms seemed creeping in and out, while the figure grew paler and paler, till my Uncle, who liked his pipe, and employed the simile naturally, said the whole effigy grew to the colour of tobacco ashes, and the clusters of worms into little wriggling knots of sparks such as we see running over the residuum of a burnt sheet of paper. And so with the strong draught caused by the fire, and the current of air from the window, which was rattling in the storm, the feet seemed to be drawn into the fire-place, and the whole figure, light as ashes, floated away with them, and disappeared with a whisk up the capacious old chimney.

It seemed to my Uncle that the fire suddenly darkened and the air grew icy cold, and there came an awful roar and riot of tempest, which shook the old house from top to base, and sounded like the yelling of a bloodthirsty mob on receiving a new and long-expected victim.

Good Uncle Watson used to say, "I have been in many situations of fear and danger in the course of my life, but never did I pray with so much agony before or since; for then, as now, it was clear beyond a cavil that I had actually beheld the phantom of an evil spirit."

CONCLUSION.

Now there are two curious circumstances to be observed in this relation of my Uncle's, who was, as I have said, a perfectly veracious man.

First—The wax candle which he took from the press in the parlour and burnt at his bedside on that horrible night was unquestionably, according to the testimony of the old deaf servant, who had been fifty years at Wauling, that identical piece of "holy candle" which had stood in the fingers of the poor lady's corpse, and concerning which the old Irish crone, long since dead, had delivered the curious curse I have mentioned against the Captain.

Secondly—Behind the drawer under the looking-glass, he did actually discover a second but secret drawer, in which were concealed the identical papers which he had suspected the attorney of having made away with. There were circumstances, too, afterwards disclosed which convinced my Uncle that the old man had deposited them there preparatory to burning them, which he had nearly made up his mind to do.

Now, a very remarkable ingredient in this tale of my Uncle Watson was this, that so far as my father, who had never seen Captain Walshawe in the course of his life, could gather, the phantom had exhibited a horrible and grotesque, but unmistakable resemblance to that defunct scamp in the various stages of his long life.

Wauling was sold in the year 1837, and the old house shortly after pulled down, and a new one built nearer to the river. I often wonder whether it was rumoured to be haunted, and if so what stories were current about it. It was a commodious and stanch old house, and withal rather handsome; and its demolition was certainly suspicious.

A DOGGEREL IN A DORMANT-WINDOW.

(BY HYACINTH CON CAROLAN.)

High 'mong the gray roofs nooked,
As Chronos in the skies,
Red chimneys, old and crook'd,
Like headstones round me rise.

The chimneys, crook'd and old,
My neighbours in the air,
Like gods of dingy gold,
Bend sadly here and there.

The cozy crows returning
To their misty woods below,
The hill-tops dimly burning
In the sun's refracted glow,

Like purple shadows sailing
Across the sea-green sky,
Like far waves hoarsely wailing
Call dimly as they fly.

My senses, sadly dreaming,
Just hear and see them fly,
Like by-gone shadows streaming
Along pale memory's sky.

From the gray tower with its corbels,
And its belfry arching fair,
The mellow curfew warbles
Its old tune in the air;

It sails above me welling,
Like long soft summer waves,
Still quiv'ring on and swelling
Across the village graves.

My lattice open flies,
The dewy evening air,
Fresh from the starry skies,
Just stirs my silvered hair.

Come forth, my graceful pipe,
My halfpenny pipe of clay,
With Latachia ripe
We'll wile the hour away.

And musical by space,
Up from the gloaming street
Float sounds and songs apace,
And random prattle sweet.

Bold fellows laughing boldly
With soft-tongued maidens near,
Old people prating oldly,
And children's voices clear.

And in their faint gradations,
While changeless stars gleam o'er us,
I hear three generations
All tinkling in this chorus.

The twilight deepens fast,
My pipe glows like a star,
Or a distant smithy's blast,
Or a lighthouse watching far.

A lonely man am I,
In my dormant-window thinking,
So lowly, and so high
The dreamy vapour drinking.

The vapour hangs and dozes,
And the stars no more I see;
The opening film discloses
A loved pale face to me.

The sad face smiling there,
The young face as of yore,
Inexorably fair,
To speak or change no more.

The brown hair now is gray,
Of him you loved, but to—
Albeit so many years away—
Your shadow he is true.

And now my pipe is out,
I drop it 'mong the weeds,
It served its little bout,
And quietude succeeds.

And when *my* glow is o'er,
In ashes quenched my fire,
And its fragrance is no more,
And spark and smoke expire;

O'er me may some one say,
As I, of you to-day,
Beneath the nettles and the flowers
Where lies my worn-out clay;

He did in his allotted hours
What fellows sometimes shirk,
In this enormous world of ours,
His halfpenny worth of work.

Lord Palmerston.

What a marvellous man must that have been whose death in his eighty-first year, takes the nation altogether by surprise, and overwhelms it with the noblest sorrow? Other historic names have disappeared—full of years and honours—with the gradual decline and glory of a summer sunset; the public regrets and sympathies which followed them to their graves have had a retrospective and semi-historic character. They had outlived their careers, and their active lives had long receded into perspective. But here was a man of fourscore and upward, with the genial gaiety, the force, and the enterprize of early youth; with the industry of laborious manhood, and a mind luminous with the experience of nearly sixty years of active life! In the midst of the busiest life, of the hardest labour, the most vivid enjoyment of his faculties, and in possession of an influence absolutely prodigious, this great historic personage has disappeared. Never was lamentation more heartfelt and universal than that which surrounds his coffin. Half his worth was not known until he was taken from us. But it is marvellous, even under the reserves and routine of public life, how the personal character of the statesman will impress itself, and how surely the instinctive sympathies of the nation will detect and accompany what is manly, honest, and magnanimous. Already a thousand pleasant and good natured stories, which, though we had never heard them before, we feel must be true of him, so well was his playful and kindly nature understood, are springing up like flowers over his grave. But regret does not express the feeling of the nation. There is even more than a sense of bereavement. An awful feeling of uncertainty for the future mingles with the national sorrow. A great constitutional and patriotic influence, whose generous and energetic workings were thoroughly well understood, has vanished. All the evil that he neutralized or overawed is still among us. It is happy for the country that the *Times* has promptly raised its stupendous voice to re-assure the constitutional sense, and avert the panic of the public.

As in Venetian history a few great Doges stand out distinct and immortal, so is it in the long catalogue of our Prime Ministers. The great office will not make the small man great. His hour of importance over, he takes his everlasting place in the catalogue of mediocrity, and all about him goes the way of dusty death, and is forgotten. How few of our First Ministers are names to conjure by. How few are even in the public recollection associated with a defined character or a single worthy exploit. What is the essential difference, as logicians say, that separates the moral and intellectual species, to which Lord Palmerston belonged, from the vulgar genus of mankind? The creative faculty—mind in its sublimest exhibition. It is the faculty which we term originality, and think little more about it; though we are sometimes, when the great occasion comes, delighted by its audacious discoveries, and awed by its vivid miracles. The state of a mind which, by its own power, stands emancipated without effort from the littleness of precedent and of prejudice. Such was Napoleon's mind—such, under different conditions, and in a meaner field, was Lord Palmerston's: towering unfathomably above the average level of contemporary intellect, it is the property of this practical genius to reach its conclusions with the decision, force, and splendour of a thunderbolt. Every new stage in society's progress, like the birth of Hercules, is watched by a malignant influence. The powers of darkness beset the crisis. The history of human progress is that of stupendous exertion averting stupendous calamity. The chief dangers of every epoch are few. If the points where the pressure is severest be guarded successfully, the battle is won. Lord Palmerston saw the twofold perils of his day, and during his long and arduous command, has held the field against them. The Constitution is threatened at home, behind the old cry of "Reform." The liberties of Europe planted in France and in Italy are viewed by the absolute monarchies of the Continent with a jealousy which would at least, as respects Italy, if unawed by external influences, assume the form of active machinations. With what a lofty inflexibility he has maintained the interests of England, and of humanity upon these vital points, the position which he leaves to his successors attests. France, founded on the democratic principle of election, on which rested all the ancient monarchies of Europe, is the staunch ally of England; so also is Italy; and notwithstanding Mr. Disraeli's coquetry with democracy, and the certainty that from him or his followers no Reform

Bill could any longer meet with effectual resistance, the Manchester demagogues have pressed and clamoured in vain for "Reform."

To his own fair and manly policy, seconded by his wise appointment of Sir Robert Peel, may be referred, in great measure, the predominance of Palmerston sympathies at the recent elections in Ireland. That the temporary physical exhaustion, not decadence, following on a laborious Session and a General Election, which preceded for some time the acute attack to which he succumbed, has been improved by some of his subordinates, to revive in Ireland the disastrous stupidity of a policy designed to strengthen the hands, and to flatter the ambitions of the Roman Hierarchy, at the moment when Fenianism has proved them to be powerless, is one evidence of the magnitude of the shock which good government, at this side of the water, has sustained by his death.

That no general collapse of a system so wise, so generous, and so patriotic, will be tolerated in England, is indicated by the high and decided tone of the *Times*, and by the muster-roll of those able men, at whose head we place Mr. Lowe, who have recurred to the first principles of their party, and taken their stand upon that generous Continental policy, and that veneration for the Constitution of England, which were the dominant characteristics of the great Minister who is gone.

The illustrious Prime Minister had scarcely breathed his last, when the two or three organs that remain to Mr. Disraeli's party announced, as the welcome consequence of his death, the dissolution of the so-called Palmerstonian party in politics. Good news, indeed, were it for the ex-official followers of Mr. Disraeli, who have grown gray, and democratic, and pro-Romanist, in their long wait for the political degradation of the great constitutional chief, whom the country deplores—if, now that his star has set without an eclipse, the independent and liberal-minded men who supported his policy, because it was constitutional and generous, had no chance left them but to throw themselves into the arms of a leader whose policy is neither.

One thing is clear, that, not merely as a commemoration of a great political chief, but as a common platform for political organization, on which all who reverence the principles of the departed Statesman may meet and combine, the formation of a Palmerston Club, is a necessity of the hour.

BEATRICE.

A VERSE-DRAMA, IN TWO ACTS.

ACT I.—PROLOGUE.

In Venice, in the Sala del Maggior Consiglio, in the Ducal Palace, in the series of the Doges' portraits, occurs a blank space with this inscription:—"Hic est locus Marini Falieri, decapitati pro criminibus." His half-brother, Andrea Faliero, suspected but not convicted of complicity in his treason, suffered the confiscation of all his lands and goods, and a sentence, under pain of death, to remain within the liberties of Venice. His noble wife died soon after, in a convent: and he, with his infant daughter, repaired to the island of Torcello, where working in his boat as a Fisherman, he maintained himself to his death. His daughter Beatrice having been, by a strange adventure, lost to him in her sixteenth year, he left none on earth of his name and lineage.

PALAZZO, ON THE CANALE GRANDE.

CHORUS.

SAD night is o'er the City of the Isles,
And o'er a palace that amid her glooming
With a radiant halo smiles,
While music from its windows booming
Floats the voice of masque and measure
Through distant domes and marble piles,
And hymns the jubilee of youth and pleasure.

Between the ripple dimly plashing,
And the dark roof looming high,
Lost in the funereal sky,
Like many-coloured jewels flashing,
Small lamps in loops and rosaries of fire,
Verdant and blood-red, trembling, turning—
Yellow, blue—in the deep water burning,
From dark till dawning
Set all aglow the wide concáve,
And splash and stain the marble and the wave.

From balconies in air,
Th' emblazoned silken awning
Flows like a lazy sail;
And gondoliers down there,
And Masks upon the stair,
Hear music swelling o'er them like a gale.

Italian grace and gaiety,
And silver-bearded policy,
Princes and soldiers, sage and great,
The craft and splendour of the state,
Proud dames, and Adria's fair daughters,
The sirens of Venetian waters,

Beautiful as summer dreams
Dreamed in haunted forest glade,
By silvery streams in leafy gleams,
Floating through the awful shade.

The noble palace peopled was right meetly,
And in its wide saloons the dance went featly,
And high above the hum
Swelled the thunder and the hoot
Of theorbo and of viol, of the hautboy and the flute,
And the roaring of the drum.

SCENE.

A ROOM IN THE SAME PALAZZO, APART FROM THE MASQUES AND DANCERS.

[*Young* Julio Contarini, *leaning against a pillar, looks sadly through the window, his arms folded, and his mask in his hand.*]

Francesco Cornaro.—Old Andrea Aldini, dead at last!
Some pretty portraits and—originals,
Ha, ha! have lost a master. Died this evening
About sunset.
Julio.— One old fool less in Venice.
Francesco.—Nay, he'll be missed—missed at the Faro-table.
Ha, ha, ha!—missed at *other* places too.
Made all he could of life—*no* fool, think *I*—
Eat his peach to the stone—ah, ha!
Julio.— Play out
The game! still, where the flowers and music were,
Linger, in deepening solitude and shadow,
And see the last lamp out.
Francesco.— Per Bacco! yes.
Bravo! Amen, say I!
Julio.— The revel o'er,
Good-bye! Glide out, and home, and come no more—
Gape under fathoms of oblivion.
Turn up no more, save for a year or two,
In young men's jibing talk.
Francesco.— Each has his turn.
Julio.—The moon is low already! The sky, how clear;
The stars blink strangely.
Francesco.— 'Twill be sultry weather.
Julio.—(Looking to the sky)—Up there's a mighty allegory.
Francesco.—Ay, sir, for lovers and astrologers.
But wherefore here, signor? The dancers miss you.
Julio.—I miss not them.
Francesco.— Come, come, you are no cynic.
Music and tread of dancers in the ear.
Come! This is life.
Julio.— And life's a bitter pill.
Francesco.—Pish!—affectation!—come. It is *enchanting.*
Julio.—Hear—see—wonder—how beautiful it is!
The sneering laughter—whispered lust—pastiles—
And drilled musicians—wax-lights—rustling silks—
Better the scent of wild-flowers on the air,
The tune of nightingales and ring of waves,
And simple love under the kind cold moon!
I'm tired.
Francesco.— And so am I.
Julio.— Of me—I'm going.

Francesco.—What! going?
Julio.— Ay, Francesco, cap and mantle;
Going.
Francesco.—To moonlight and—to simple love?
Julio.—I like to be alone—I choose to think.
Francesco.—I could say where—ha! But I must not teaze.
Julio.—Ay, amen! To the devil if you please—
To Pluto, signor, so I go alone.
Farewell, Francesco.
Francesco.— Fare ye well. He's gone.
[*Exit* Julio.

SCENE.

THE OPEN SEA NEAR VENICE—JULIO IS SEEN ALONE IN HIS GONDOLA, ROWING SLOWLY.

CHORUS.

Here we hover—here we trace
Contarini's wondrous grace,
As across the mirror wide,
Like a phantom of the tide,
Boat and hero silent glide,
Sweeping slowly, far from shore,
Darkest sea with flashing oar—
In that shadow, in that beam,
Now behold him like a dream.

Dark locks, many a curling fold,
Such as young Antinous wore,
Touched with light of misty gold,
Softly threw their shadows o'er
A broad low brow with pride o'erfraught—
Brow like ivory sculptor-wrought
Into beauteous curves of thought;
Oval face of Moorish tint,
Features well-nigh feminine,
Chiselled with a touch so fine,
So exquisite in every line;
Pencilled eyebrow, dreamy lash,
Carmine lip, with dark moustache,
And haughty smile of pearly glint.

Soft as night, those eyes of his,
Gloomed with shadows of the abyss;
Eyes of darkness, large and deep,
Where fires unfathomed play and sleep—
Sometimes drowsed in haughty dreams,
Sometimes flaming cold and wild,
They with fatal purpose smiled,
Or darkly glowed with passion's gleams.

What their colour, what their light?
Canst thou fix the hues of night,
Or colour of the thunder cloud
Wherefrom the lightning leaps?
Or as the wave beneath the steeps
Where midnight blackness broods and sleeps
Into hidden moonlight dashes,
Into sudden splendour flashes—
And swallowed straight in blacker night
Blinds the gazer's dazzled sight.

SCENE.

THE ISLAND OF TORCELLO—MOONLIGHT.

[*The fisherman's casement, from the rocks and myrtles above, overlooking the water; the light of a lamp shines from it; a flight of rude stone steps leads down to the water from the door of the building.*]

[Julio's *gondola—he ceases rowing, and gazes.*]

Julio.—How pretty this! The waters seek
So wooingly this bosky creek;
How lovingly the moonlight falls
On leafy cliff and cottage walls!
How all its peaks and edges glimmer,
And all its myrtles softly shimmer;
Rear'd of shadows and of light,
Sweet creation of the night!
From the rock's projecting crest,
Venturous as a martlet's nest,
The cot o'erhangs the water's breast.
Nets are clinging on the wall,
Spars and tackling loosely lie,
And the patched boat high and dry,
Gaff and anchor rusted all;
O'er the waters softly swelling,
This thread of light, so pure and shy,
Seaward slanting from on high,
Glimmers from a Fisher's dwelling.

[*The casement opens and* Beatrice, *expecting her father's return, sings a hymn.*]

Gentle, ye billows,
Soft blow the wind,
Watch o'er us, angels,
Mary, be kind.

Fishermen followed
The steps of the Lord;
Oft in their fishing boats
Preached He the word.

Pray for us, Pietro,
Pray for us, John,
Pray for us, Giacomo,
Zebedee's son.

If it be stormy,
Fear not the sea;
Jesus upon it
Is walking by thee.

Plumage of sea-birds,
Drift of the foam,
White as the angels,
Pure as their home.

Holy the water,
Holy the sea,
Blessed in Jordan
And in Galilee.

Fear not the wild wind,
Fear not the sea,
Christ rules the water,
And careth for thee.

Billows, be gentle,
Soft blow the wind,
Watch o'er us, angels,
Mary, be kind.

[*The voice ceases.*]

Julio.—Sure never voice so wildly sweet
Did the ear of listener greet!

[*Sings, answering her.*]

Soft be the billows,
Gentle the wind,
Angels watch over thee,
Mary, be kind.

[Beatrice *comes to the casement, and looks out timidly in the light of the lamp.*]

Julio.—By heaven! she is a pretty creature;
What a charm in every feature!
Beatrice.—That is not my father's boat,
Nor Leonardo's voice.
Julio.—[*To himself.*] I vote
We try a stave, for Cupid's wings
Waft music as they fly—she sings!
Beatrice.—[*Singing.*] If thou be'st honest
Stretch to thy oar,
Give thee good night, friend,
Come here no more.

[*She closes the casement and goes back, the lamp still burning.*]

Julio.—Angels and fairest saints of heaven!
Elysian dream!
Oh! could I deem
So beautiful a face,
So sweet and sad a grace
To mortal ever given!
If I be honest?—ay, amen!
I will be honest, so you come again.
I'll watch and listen for a glance,
Or song—and pray to Venus—or to Chance.
I'd count the watches of the long night o'er
To hear or see thee, wondrous maid, once more.

[*Folds his cloak about him; and, resting his cheek upon his hand, watches the casement from which issues the ray of the lamp, but in vain—she comes not again.*]

[*He sings.*]

A siren once her sea-girt home
With wild notes haunting,
Her spell upon the wingèd foam
And breezes chanting,
By moonlight, as he floated near,
With a sweet madness thralled the ear
Of a lonely Gondolier.

While he listens, while he dreams
On billows rocking,
Sweeter every moment seems
That Siren's mocking;
Other song will ne'er be dear,
Or singer, to the heart or ear
Of that lonely Gondolier.

His voice, harmonious, never more
By marble stair
Shall, through Venetian windings, soar
On trembling air.
On lonely waves, in haunted ear,
The unreal music, wild and clear,
Lures that lonely Gondolier.

Shadowed by that listening isle,
By her enchanted,
Her charm and music still beguile
His senses haunted.
And if that Spirit, strangely dear,
Will sing no more, nor yet appear,
Dies that lonely Gondolier.

[*Listening within, her finger to her lip.*]

Beatrice.—Who can be the Gondolier,
Whom I see not, only hear?
What can he want? the saucy youth!
"Appear" and "sing," not I, in truth.

[*A pause.*]

His voice was wondrous sweet and clear!

[*As he in his boat slowly recedes,* Julio *sings again.*]

Julio.—A siren once her sea-girt home
With wild notes haunting,
Her spell upon the wingèd foam
And breezes chanting.
By moonlight, as he floated near,
With a sweet madness thralled the ear
Of a lonely Gondolier.

[*The notes die away in the increasing distance.*]
[*She listens for some time.*]

Beatrice.—And so the foolish dream is done;
I'm glad the saucy fellow's gone.

[*A pause.*]

Glad, too, he lighted here by night,
He'll never find it in daylight.
Yes, glad—*right* glad—he'll come no more.

[*Listens for a longer time.*]

And so, the foolish dream *is* o'er.
'Tis very well—it was not meet.

[*Another pause, as she listens vainly. She sighs.*]

And the song was wondrous sweet!

[*Opens the casement and looks out. A pause.*]

Quite gone—I'm glad—it was too bold.

[*Pause.*]

And yet the song was passing sweet!
Thou tuneful Gondolier! whom sight
Of mine shall ne'er behold;
For thy sweet song—good night!

[*She closes the casement.*]

SCENE.

THE ISLAND OF TORCELLO—SUNSET. THE FISHERMAN'S DWELLING AS BEFORE.

[Beatrice *in the casement, pensive, leaning on her hand.*]

CHORUS.

Sits she there with sea-gray eyes
  Gazing o'er the sea,
In sunset dreams, beneath the skies
  That dream-like transient be.
And floats there in the fading light
A tender thought of yesternight,
And with the cold air steals along
A phantom echo of that song
From the region ghostly high,
From the land of memory,
Where all things live that seem to die?

    Slowly shifting into rest,
    Like the vapours of the west,
    In many a hue and fold
    Moves her saddened reverie
    Whose moods may thus be told.

THE REVERIE OF BEATRICE.

The sinking sun askance
Spreads a dull glare
Through evening air
And all things in a happy trance,
The water and the city stand
Like an enchanted sea and land;
The sea-breeze wakens clear and cold
Over the azure wide,
Before whose breath in threads of gold
The ruddy ripples glide,
And chasing break and mingle;
While clear as bells,
Each wavelet tells
O'er the stones on the hollow shingle.

The rising of winds and the fall of the waves!
I love the music of shingle and caves—
The billows that travel so far to die
In foam on the loved shore where they lie.

I lean my cold cheek on my hand,
And as a child with open eyes,
Listens in a dim surprise
To some story
Of grief and glory
It cannot understand;
So, like that child
To meanings of a music wild
I listen in a rapture lonely,
Not understanding, listening only—
To a story not for me;
And let my fancies come and go,
And fall and flow
With the eternal sea.

[*The gondola of* Julio Contarini *is seen approaching. It glides into the wooded creek. He is disguised as a minstrel; and, standing in the boat, lifts his cap.*]

Julio.—Donna, in that casement high,
Wilt thou brook my minstrelsy;
Shall I sing—or, may I try?
Beatrice.—And what art thou?
Julio.— A Gondolier,
Who can make music if thou'lt hear;
A wandering minstrel, who will sing,
For a baiocco, anything.
Beatrice.—[*Aside.*] 'Tis he. It is that voice so clear.
[*Aloud.*] If my father find thee here,
Stranger, it will cost thee dear.
Julio.—What guerdon can I pay too dear
For the chance of being here,
Such as thou art being near?
Beatrice.—[*Aside.*] I'll hear him sing—I'm surely right—
'Twas he who sang on yesternight!
[*Aloud.*] Here's a baiocco—so—let's hear
A song about a gondolier
And a sea-nymph singing near.
Have you none such?

[*From the window she throws the coin, which he receiving, pierces with a blow of his dagger-point, and kissing it, attaches it to a golden chain that he draws from under his tabarro, and replaces next his heart.* Beatrice *laughs.*]

Julio.—[*Aloud.*] Thy laughter, like the summer wind,
With careless rapture throwing
The modest roses up and down,
New ruffled beauties blowing
Over, sweetly here and there,
With sudden wildness fills the air!
Laugh on, laugh on,
Thou lovely one!
[*Aside.*] Her laughing sweeter is than singing—
How cheerily it thrills!
Running music in its rills—
What a sparkle and a ringing!
Beatrice.—'Tis to see a coin so vile
Hung upon a golden chain,
Within a tabard to remain,
Like a relic or an order!
Could Paliaccio aught absurder?

[*She laughs again.*]

Julio.—[*Sings.*] The guerdon he has gained,
Dropped by her so laughingly,
To him a talisman from high!
Worshipped with a kiss and sigh,
By her is yet disdained.

The folly she disdained,
If yet a folly, is a sign
Of a madness half divine—
Thine the cause, the madness mine!
And yet it is disdained.

The folly she disdained!
Oh! like the heart he laid it to,
The homely coin is metal true,
And like his heart is wounded through,
And like his heart is chained.

Beatrice.—Signor, thou art no Gondolier—
No golden chains such people wear—
Oh! why didst thou come here?
Julio.—As a spirit cannot sleep,
Cannot stay, but from the deep
Rises at a spell.
So, enchantress! here am I.
Beatrice.—Ay, here thou art, but why—
And who?
Julio.— Who? it matters not to tell.
And why?—'Tis loving thee so well!
Beatrice.—In an old ballad I have read
What flatteries a gallant said,
And turned a maiden's foolish head.
Julio.—If thou knew'st in my strange wooing,
In this voyage of my love,
How near I sail to my undoing,
By my Guardian Saint above!
I swear thou wouldst believe my love.
Beatrice.—Art thou then that Gondolier
Who last night was singing here;
Tell me ere we part?
Julio.—I am, indeed, that Gondolier,
And thou—that fatal siren art.

CHORUS.

And so the self-same way,
From day to day;
Sometimes in blithesome morn,
Sometimes by twilight lorn,
Or when the red sun braves
Westward the blazing sea,
Floating on a sky of waves—
Or in night's lonely noon,
When wide in starlight quivers the lagoon—
He, like a vision, came and went,
Or as sweet music rises, and is spent.

SCENE.

THE SAME ON THE NEXT EVENING—JULIO AND BEATRICE CONVERSING AS BEFORE.

Julio.—When other eye save thine is near
It were not safe I should be here—
The danger is not now for me,
But present, dear one, is for thee.

And does thy father, all the year,
He and thy mother still live here?
Beatrice.—My mother's dead—
Oh! is she dead?
What has my careless folly said!
I would not stir one grief in thee
For all the treasures on the sea.
Beatrice.—*Not* grief, but joy for evermore,
That she to death is wed.
We say they die who go before,
'Tis we who stay are dead.
The earth her mouldering image shrouds,
But robed above the golden clouds,
She lifts adoring hands and eyes
To God all glorious, good, and wise;

And with the angels white and high
She walks the flooring of the sky—
With crown of light,
In robe of white,
Where rolls the chant of victory.

CHORUS.

Visits made in mystery,
Suddenness and secrecy,
For he knew his father's pride,
Ere Beatrice should be his bride,
Would lay her dead beneath the tide.

He *knew* what *she* knew not, the story
Of her lineage and its fall—
Of Faliero's ancient glory—
Of the treason and the pall.

Little to her dared he tell,
But she came to like him well;
And from her rocky citadel,
Above the waters' sway and swell,
To him she would the simple lore
Of all her pretty life run o'er.

SCENE.

THE SAME, BY MOONLIGHT; SOME NIGHTS LATER.

[Beatrice *relating to* Julio *how with her father and Leonardo she sailed in the fishing-boat to visit the convent where her mother is buried.*]

Beatrice.—They lifted me down from the giddy plank
Into the boat that rose and sank;
The eager sails that rattle and slap
With thundering flap,
At a turn of the tiller filled at last,
And stooped the mast
As the wet rope raced through the mooring-ring.
On the mad waves the boat was free;
And like a wild-bird on the wing,
With sudden dive and soaring swing,
Still bending with the breeze away,
Away she goes on the laughing sea,
'Mong waves and romping wind and spray.

Away the dancing island goes,
The sleeping headland dipt and rose.
The billows that wild creatures be
Of the hearty and wondrous sea,
In sport and power
Welcome the boat with snort and plash
And riotous dash,
And hail of foamy shower.
High, spring high!
Surge in your roaring glee.
Fly, foam, fly!
And whirling mist of the sea!

The gusty wind be-stunned my ear,
And drenched with pelting brine my hair;
Delightful were to me
The frown and the flash of the billows free
And the smell of the breezy sea!

Laughing with tremulous fear and delight;
Salt on my cheek, and salt on my lips;
With the watery grip of my finger-tips
I held the dripping gunwale tight.

When on the shore she furled her wing
How beautiful was everything!
Upon the mountain, sun and shade
A splendour drowned in darkness made,
Purple and gold, all blurred and barred;
And peeping wild-flowers' tiny sheen,
Blue, argent, crimson, round were starred,
Like fairy fires beneath the green;
Oh! sweet was all I saw to me,
And all I heard an ecstasy!

The winsome wind in all its moods,
The warble and the coo of woods,
The darkened sward and fragrant air,
The mossy vault, the dripping well,
Whose darksome drops in music fell
Like gliding beads of murmured prayer.
Where cypresses and long grass wave,
A young Nun took me by the hand,
And passing many a grave,
With a sad sweetness gently said,
"Here, little girl, thy mother's laid;
Oh, sister, pray that I
As well may live, as happy die."
She looked on the grave with a gentle sigh—
I often think she wished to die;
And for these words so kind and sweet
I could have kneeled and kissed her feet.
She was so young and I a child,
I felt she clung to me;
Sad was her face, and never smiled,
Yet smiling seemed to be.
It was, I think, an angel near,
Whom we could neither see nor hear,
That looked on her with a smile so bright
As glorified her in its light.

And oft when pale the evening skies,
And fading hues and outlines swim,
When stars are soft, and waves grow dim,
That pretty lady's deep gray eyes
In twilight hours before me rise.

While homeward sailed our boat before
The sweet air blowing from the shore,
I silent gazed the gunwale o'er
On all that glided from my view,
The darkening trees and gables gray,
As our boat swept moaning through
The waters of the bay.

And like a voice of other years
Returning in a dream,
So far, so sweet, and sad, it fell
And moving, why I could not tell,
With its mysterious harmonies,
And unremembered memories,

The fountain of my tears;
From the gray belfry o'er the trees
Glided down the summer breeze,
The clear note of the bell.

CHORUS.

And when the low farewell was spoken,
And when her light was gone,
And when the spell and dream were broken,
And sea and sky were lone,
Looking 'twixt the sea and sky
With desert gaze and weary sigh,
With wildered hope, and yearning sigh,
She holds communion with her soul.
And thus, alone, debated she—
"A worker of mosaic, he;
"Or a carver fine maybe,
"Of those charmed heads and flowers,
"Snakes and creatures twined in bowers,
"That I listen 'neath for hours.
"And does he love me as he says,
"Or—are his ways like others' ways?
"And will my hero come to-morrow—
"Will he come again?
"Oh! why is love so like a sorrow—
"Hope so nearly pain?"

All on her hand she laid her head;
And with these thoughts her young brain rife,
Light slumber o'er her little bed
Winged away her waking care;
But quiet days for her were fled;
Without him, sea and sky were dead;
And, before she was aware,
He grew the music of her life.

BEATRICE.

A VERSE-DRAMA, IN TWO ACTS.

ACT II.

CHORUS.

THE Princess fair, her glory flown,
   Forlorn that lies in state;
While her cold temples wear the crown,
   Shows sadly fair and great.
Her people come, her people go,
   And early pass, and late,
To look upon the regal woe,
   And vanity of state.
Beneath the starry tapers, greeted
   By the frozen eyes,
Where darkly in the coffin sheeted
   The glimmering pallor lies,
They see the lines of beauty rule,
   Where all its glow is ended,
Corruption that is beautiful,
   And sadness that is splendid.
In marble beauty, night and day,
   E'en thus was Venice seen;
Thus in the death of spirit lay
   The Adriatic queen.

Every man uncertain is—
In no stay doth he dwell,
But walks through life as he is shown
By gleams through yawning darkness thrown—
By lights that fall from paradise,
And hues that cross from hell.
Haunted, though he does not see,
By giants of eternity.

Can we read his words or ways?
   Whence he acts, or whereto thinks?
A vapour changing as we gaze,
   An utterance of the Sphinx!
Still the man our judgment baulks,
   Good is he? or, is he evil?
At his right an Angel walks,
   And at his left a Devil.

Beside that beauty dead and cold,
With word of power, and vengeful hand,
I smite the coffin with my wand.
As death and sin thou workest there
Rise up thou living Monster old,
Reveal thy presence in the air!

SCENE.

A GORGEOUS CHAMBER IN THE PALAZZO OF NERŒA, OVERLOOKING THE CANAL.
NERŒA ALONE.

CHORUS.

An icy fear and rapture spread
Up from my foot-sole to my head!
This Wonder is no mortal Leman.
Spirit of the starry host—
Lais—Cleopatra's ghost—
Saddest Angel—fairest Demon!
Lo! All human beauties paling
In her lonely splendour, wane.
'Tis some antique dream exhaling
From the dead Apelles' brain!

Fell beauty!—Love akin to hate.
Indolent and coy she sate:
Loose her girdle o'er her hips,
Luxury in every wile—
A mystic pain—a loving guile.
The scarlet scorn of cruel lips,
The pearly danger of her smile—
Her downward smile and glance oblique,
Evil—yet Madonna-like!
Her girlish bosom's wooing swell
Her cheek's shy dimple, like the play
Of waters darkling in a well,
Lure not a lover but a prey.
In all her lithe limbs' modulations,
In the proud fulness of her throat,
In all her throbbing undulations,
The sorceries of beauty float.

Light at every stir up-throwing,
At every stir new marvels showing,
With enamelled pictures glowing,
Diamond-set, and golden-chased,
Heroes of Venetian story
In loose chains of linked medallions
Loop the lithe round of her waist.
Riches floated here, in galleons,
China silk, and webs of gold,
Round her throw an orient glory.
Green and crimson jewels burning
Glare and vanish at each turning,
Flash and vanish in each fold;
As the fiery eyes of snakes
Glide through nooks of flowery brakes,
Glare and vanish in each fold.

She was a deep thought of the Muse,
Whom canvas, marble, words refuse:
Striving what she was to tell.
Is but a yearning and farewell—
And so—mute as it rose,
The vision, brief and broken,
With me to darkness goes
Unspoken.

But softly as an Oriel saint
Shadowed on a holy floor,
On memory that thrill and taint,
Will smile and burn for evermore.

Who enters ? Lo !

Passing phantom-like the door
A silent Monk stands on the floor.
Is he anchorite or devil ?
High and gaunt this form of evil,
Gliding noiselessly, has sought her,
As a shadow on the water.
Marble-like beneath his cowl
Gleams the curve of his anguine scowl,
The broad cold eyes that greenly stare,
And ever seem to search and smile,
And find in all things something vile.
Like insult and pollution scare,
She did not mean to greet him here—
She rose as people rise in fear.
He stood there in his garment sooty,
She stood gleaming in her glory,
Face to face, like Death and Beauty,
In a painted allegory.

[*A pause, during which she gazes on him.*]

Nerœa.—How camest thou here ?
Spalatro.— Your signoria's order.
Nerœa.—I know thee not.
Spalatro.— Thou know'st me not. And yet
Lady, thou know'st me well.
Nerœa.— Who called thee hither ?
Spalatro.—Giacopo.
Nerœa.— Then thou art—
Spalatro.— Fra Spalatro.
Nerœa.—Hast thou a *sign ?*
Spalatro.— Thy ring, signora ! Take it.
Nerœa.—Ha ! yes—I've heard. Be frank with me—fear nothing.
Spalatro.—I fear nothing.
Nerœa.— Nor *I.* Listen. My lover—
My noble lover—by a base girl cozened !
Spalatro.—Alas ! Alas !
Nerœa.— By a base huzzy in
A Fisher's cot.—
Spalatro.— Insufferably queer !
Nerœa.—My own—mine always—for a year and more—
Mine passionately—till—of late—and now—[*She pauses*].
Spalatro.—And now is cooling ? Thine—and—some one else's ?
What can I do ?
Nerœa.— What *can'st* thou do ? *Well,* sir ?
Spalatro.—A philtre ?
Nerœa.— No.
Spalatro.— Find out who is the rival ?
Nerœa.—I know it.
Spalatro.— By my art inform thee how
'Twill end ?
Nerœa.— Come, come. Can thine art do no more ?
Spalatro.—Many things.
Nerœa.— Name them.
Spalatro.— I would first know, lady,
What thou requir'st.

Nerœa.— Why fears't thou to say all,
If thou mean'st all ?
Spalatro.— We all are cowards, lady.
Nerœa.—Cowards ? Thou sayest thou fearest nothing.
Spalatro.—Nothing—nothing ! never ! so long as I am safe.
Nerœa.—Safe—and *thy* trade !
Spalatro.— Safe—because, being wise,
I am a coward—being coward—safe.
Nerœa.—Go on.
Spalatro.— Oh ! not before your ladyship.
Nerœa.—Thy life *is* in my hand.

[Spalatro *smiles, and bows very low.*]

Is poison more
Than witch-craft, villain ? Ay, I've said it—speak.
Spalatro.—Some people think it surer—that is all.
Nerœa.—Go on.
Spalatro.— I follow—rather—step by step.
Nerœa.—Go on.
Spalatro.— Nay, not before your ladyship.
Nerœa.—Then, by St. Mark ! thou'lt hold thy peace ! Shall I
Play Tempter to the Fiend, and drop again
Into his hollow ear his damned suggestion,
And wring my heart in syllables of terror,
That thou mayst smile ? Gaunt Blasphemy, away !
And elsewhere, saint-like, cowl thy murderous head,
And look like hell, and smile, and smell of death.
Oh God ! why did I call thee here ?

[Nerœa *passes through the curtains to the balcony.*]

Spalatro.— Brava !
Ever the same. They'd murder prettily.
For *us*, the danger and the mire of murder ;
For them, its profit and romance. Is't so ?
Yea, by my soul ! Thou'lt put thy dainty hand to't,
Beautiful Cannibal ! I know thy kind.
None of thine airs with me ! I seat me here.
She'll come back presently, in her right mind ;
And at my feet, a penitent—henceforth
Gentle, and as she ought to be, afraid.

SCENE.

THE BALCONY—NERŒA ALONE, LEANING OVER IT—MOONLIGHT.

Nerœa.—Ah ! ha, ha, ha ! Thank God ! The air, the moonlight.
Oh ! cooling floods, pour drowning o'er the fire
Of my hot temples, and my wild heart leaping
Against this ribbed cage. Away, away !
To die is better. Stars !—cold eyes of heaven,
That wake, and look, and wake, and never feel.
Is there no pity ? Spirits !—angels !—nothing.
No pity ! Is there duty, truth, or peace ?
Cares the great God for *me*, or what I do !
Is there peace anywhere ? tremendous God !
Is time, from birth to death, an agony ?
Were I a god, I could not deal in riddles ;
And with unreal lights and voices scare
Poor creatures, starless, on a waste benighted.
The boatman's daughter !—was it so frightful ?—
That drowned herself for love. I've thought of her
For many a day. How beautiful she looked !

And God is truth they say. She could not be
Unhappy and look *so* like to an Angel!
And to my aunt I said, preach as they may,
'Tis well—that girl did right—the girl's in heaven!
My poor aunt at her prayers—good, narrow soul!
So cold, and *I*—God makes us differently—
So reptile-cold some—some of fire—all fire!
The fire—the worm—the worm that dieth not—
The fire—the fire. And I who said she was
In heav'n; that she did right—lo! here am I,
All lost for him! and he all lost to me—
And here am I, and there the dark sea sleeps.
'Twas in the night she did it. What am I?
She dared it, all alone, poor soul!—from night
To darker night, so easy, and I dare not.
How black it looks, remorseless, and I shudder.
Oh, death! thou anodyne appalling! something
That never can be undone! I'm no more
The brave girl I once was—a coward grown.
I that was once so brave; and if I live,
She cannot—no, she cannot. Fool! she cannot.

SCENE.

THE SAME GORGEOUS CHAMBER IN THE PALAZZO OF NERŒA, OVERLOOKING THE CANAL

[*An hour later.* **Fra Spalatro,** *smiling, his hand on the door at which he stands.* **Nerœa** *pale and seated near a lamp, looking sternly at him.*]

Spalatro.—*Now*, madam, all is clear. No oracles.
Each understands the other. It shall be—
Ay, it shall come to pass, not by *my* hand,
But by a *sure* one, lady.
Nerœa.— There, there, there—go!
Spalatro.—Thou know'st young Giacopo?
Nerœa.— For God's sake, go.
Spalatro.—Your Excellenza's most devoted friend,
And grateful slave, I do obey thee, lady;
So, fare thee well, and Fortune grant thee—all things.
[*Exit* **Spalatro.**

[*An interval of silence, during which she gazes wildly at the door through which he departed.*

Nerœa.—'Tis gone—and I am of the dead—alone.
I've talked with horror. They have murdered me.
I fear myself, and walk the world a ghost.
Hark! there he goes, a message on the wave,
And leaves me here, this hour's eternal slave.

SCENE.

THE ISLAND OF TORCELLO. MOONLIGHT.

[*The fisherman's cottage. A small lamp in the casement. The door is open.* **Beatrice** *leans upon the door-post, her hand from within upon the hatch.* **Julio** *on the rude stepo, without, his hand on hers.*]

CHORUS.

As on that night they talked alone,
Changed, on a sudden, Julio's tone;
Paled his cheek, and thrilled his tone,
As if a changeless dark or light—
Deathless summer—mortal blight.
The chance or fear of all his life
With that hour began or ended,
On a girlish word depended.
"Oh! Beatrice, be thou my wife!"

Well had the tiny shaft been shot,
And Cytherea's graceful son,
Laughing, saw his work was done;
And in a true lover's knot
Tied up all his arrows now,
Fancy-tipt and fiery shafted,
Smiling, too, unstrung his bow.

Through her heart the sweet voice wafted,
Rising down the way of life—
Down the steeps of distant life—
A call of unseen Fate resembled.
All at once came up a fear,
Love for a moment chilled and trembled.
She heard the voice so sweetly rise,
Like a bugle in the skies.
And she looked in Julio's eyes,
Now so awful yet so dear.

Childish days, so glad and kind,
Away with all their treasures fleet,
Like early bloom on autumn wind,
And hurry drifting by her feet.
Vanishes the cottage wall,
The homely stair, the roses—all—
And the old lamp's friendly spark—
The sameness and the safety o'er,
The great world opens wide before,
And a journey in the dark!

Long although the journey—colder,
Darker than these fears of mine—
With my hand upon thy shoulder
And the other locked in thine;
And my head upon thy breast,
All is light and all is rest!
So thought she, and both were still,
Trembling said she, then, "I will."

SCENE.

THE ISLAND OF TORCELLO.

[*The night following.*]

[Beatrice *is seen approaching the window of a ruinous building.*]

CHORUS.

In red and golden billows
Across the waning skies
The sunset glory wafted
In eastern darkness dies:
Soft floats the gray of twilight
Against the rosy tide,
And the starry hosts of heaven
Up the darkening welkin ride.
'Tis sacred night's dominion,
Bright Dian rideth low,
Her fairy lights pursuing
The fleeting sunset-glow.
From Lido and Murano
The bells have ceased their ringing,
In groves of island gardens
The nightingales are singing;

The cheer of distant mariners,
The ripple of the sea,
A song upon the waters
Sound sweet and lonelily.
The Moon reginal sailing
Down Adria's nightly lake
A silver largesse showers,
All sparkling in her wake.

Cowering from the silvery beams,
The shadowed evergreens among,
Mid leafy crags and dewy bowers,
And ruin-haunting flowers,
Grimly couchant, dreams
A building of another age,
Bowed and furrowed as a sage,
And as a monster strong;
And through their sockets, sunk and deep,
With a blearing furnace
It's wicked windows wince and peep
From under their beetling cornice.
Here, in these glimmering dungeons sunk,
Dwells Spalatro the Monk.
Holy, perchance, or darkly wise,
Some said he was projecting gold,
Some whispered that he poisons sold,
And up and down the gamut told
Of Magic's impious mysteries.
About this Friar
She'd fain have known—or more or less.
The web of thought for her was ravelled,
She could not tell,
She dared not guess,
For his knowledge where he travelled,
Than the door of Heaven higher,
Lower than the gates of Hell.
With Spalatro there dwelt another
Slave—or Brother.
An ugly loathsome wight,
All as Gehazi white
With mildew of a leprosy.
Him with a cynic joy
Called he his Beauty and his Boy.
He looked the child of Death and Sin;
Bald were his leprous head and chin;
Impish the bestial peak of his ear,
His hanging mouth and goggle lear.
O'er his warped shape this hideous knave
Wore the red frock of a galley-slave.
He ever busy, ever by,
Hung like his parted shadow nigh,
That could not leave him quite.
Glooming, hovering there and here,
Nearer sometimes—always near—
And watched him as he walked or stood,
Watched as he pondered—as he passed,
With the gaze of a Fiend in servitude,
Who in his master eyes a prey,
Will be commanded, will obey,
But will not let him get away,
Knowing that, his labour o'er,
His hour at last
Will come, and change no more.

In those lone cavernous rooms,
Like the foul spirits in the tombs,
By that furnace throbbing redly,
'Mong the phials sealed with clay,
Glasses crooked and ashes gray,
Pottering o'er their business deadly,
They two smouldered life away.
The glow this night
Of furnace light,
While around the moonlight reigns,
Trembles through the deep-barred panes
That flare like the eyes of a sullen beast,
Blood-red upon the holy east.
A labour of some sort was there
She knew full well;
Foul or fair she could not tell—
It scarce was prayer.

[Beatrice *taps at the window.*]

Spalatro.—What makest thou tapping at my window, hey?
Beatrice.—Pardon, good Father, I know not where else,
In all the world, to look for help.
Spalatro.— Ay, help!
Ay, always, help. The same cry ever, help!
Beatrice.—My soul is troubled, and thy holy counsel——
Spalatro.—Bah! Holy Polcinello? Penance—shrift!
How knowst *thou* I'm in orders? If I be,
'Tis all one; for I'm here by the Abbot's order,
Preparing medicines, not to hear confessions.
Trouble! ha, ha! We've all our troubles, Baby.
Go to the Carmelites.

[*Shutting the window*].

Beatrice.— One moment, Father!
Spalatro.—Moment! *I* need food and drink like another.
I must work for it. Life's made up of moments.
Beatrice.—Here, Father, are two sequins—I've no more.
Oh! sir, for Jesus' love, do not refuse me.

[*He takes the money*].

Oh! thanks, good Signor!
Spalatro.— But I can't confess thee.
Beatrice.—'Tis no confession—'tis an omen, sir.
I'm frighted by an omen, and implore—
Spalatro.—Omen! what omen? Come, come, in a word.
Beatrice.—A dream, good sir.
Spalatro.— Ho! dreams!—and what's thy name?
Beatrice.—'Tis Beatrice, Signor.
Spalatro.— So, Beatrice,
Whose daughter art thou, girl, hey?
Beatrice.— Leonardo's,
The fisherman's, who dwells hard by.
Spalatro.— I know,
I've heard.—[*Aside.* By heaven, 'tis she!] An honest man—
His cottage hangs above the water, eh?
A worthy fisherman as there's in Venice;
And a steep flight of steps down to the water;
I've seen his cottage by the creek hard by.
Is it not so?

Beatrice.— Just so.—[*Aside.* How friendly grows he !]
Spalatro.—[*Aside.* Ha ! by St. Mark, I knew it !] Ay, I know,
Thy mother's dead ? I know—and now, good child,
Pray, what's the matter ?
Beatrice.—In my sleep a dream there came,
Voices talking first I heard,
Talking of a wedding coming,
Of my wedding, as I think.
"With a Doge's ring he'll wed me,"
Said a voice I thought was mine !
'Twas not I who spoke, and yet
I thought within myself 'twas mine.
Spalatro.—Oh ! ho !
By Lido many a Doge's ring
'Neath the sea's bell-like roar and swing,
The dip and wheel of sea-bird's wing,
Full fathoms five,
More than swimmers care to dive,
Lies low.
Beatrice.—And my mother was beside me,
White and cold, and smiling sweetly,
Like an Angel, smiling sweetly.
Blessed mother—white and cold—
In a nun-like robe of white—
White and cold as if of moonlight ;
Warp and woof were spun and shuttled,
Cold the hand she stirred my hand with.
Up got I, and I went with her,
Smiling white and cold she led me
Down the steps into the ripple—
Nothing felt I of the water ;
Deeper steps, into the water,
Side by side we trod together—
Deeper steps—beneath the water.
As I waked, I felt the water
From my face receding cold,
From my face and feet receding.
Water o'er my bosom gliding,
Coldly from my limbs subsiding,
Gliding like my sleep from me,
While from death I was emerging
From the wide and lonely sea,
Gentlest winds and waves were dirgeing
With a low-voiced melody—
With a frightful minstrelsy,
O'er the dead men in the sea.
Spalatro.—A broken dream, and fancies wild—
Away with them, thou silly child !
Beatrice.—I cannot, Father—'tis in vain,
The fancies of my dream remain
Lurking, wheeling in my brain,
Till my eyes are drowsed with pain.
Spalatro.—Into the sea, and down the stairs ?
Folly, child ! Go—say thy prayers.
Beatrice.—*Stay*, Father !—when I try to pray
'Tis lips and beads, and only they,
Thought and spirit far away !
Spalatro.—Try it again ; the saints will soften ;
A good thing cant be tried too often ;
Ave and pater—every tittle ;
Try all the saints—the big and little.

Beatrice.—The mighty mill-wheel over-shot,
With solemn feet and bearded foam,
Spinning ever, down and down,
Ever changing, changes not,
But with circling foam and feet
Will the self-same measure beat—
Ever coming, ever going,
Parting not, yet ever flowing;
So these fancies in my brain
Come again, and on again—
Ever coming, ever going,
Parting not, yet ever flowing,
And within my beating brain,
Rising, sink, and rise again.
Spalatro (calling).—Boy! how is the crucible?
Boy (*within*).—Candescent only, not yet candent.
Spalatro.—Let it burn a little stronger,
Now!— I cannot stay much longer.
What's the matter?
Beatrice.—I saw the dream 'twixt night and morning—
Father! think you 'tis a warning?
Spalatro.—Tell me—no one hears within—
Have you harboured—thought of *sin?*
Beatrice.—No.
Spalatro.—Come, speak truth, there's no one by!
(*Aside*).—Pretty parrots, how they lie!
Beatrice.—*No*, I tell thee, Father, truly.
Spalatro.—Little rogue! why so unruly?
Think you not, I know full well
Many a thing I never tell:
How beneath a window-sill,
Myrtle-shadowed, o'er the water,
Music, on the air of night,
Rises like a sudden light;
And the Noble, pretty daughter,
Ha! the Noble, whose disguise
Cheats, perchance, all other eyes,
Is seen as clear, I tell you true,
By me, as he is seen by you.

[*Looking upwards.*]

Beatrice.—No, Father! Mary! mother! No!
Spalatro.—Her eyes are innocent. A *good* dream so,
If it means that you must die.
There, don't tremble, do not cry,
When the good hour, clothed in fear,
Of endless rapture draweth near.
Be the bless'd one old or young,
A welcome clear
The angels hear.
Thro' all the bells of heaven rung—
'Twas your mother, come to tell
The silverous tidings of that bell.
Why sobbing, child?
Beatrice.—I used to see her always near,
Till the sable veil of care,
Fold by fold bedraping me,
Hid her as the cloud the star.
'Tis some evil—'tis not she.
Hell near us always—heaven so far!

Spalatro.—Ay, heaven so far—yet very near—
The blinking stars that now you see,
How far,
Measured by miles, each star?
'Twixt number and immensity,
'Twixt thought and madness—hung they be,
So many miles in space tremendous.
The living brain
Contends in vain,
To seize the sum stupendous.
Yet those stars,
Whose distance Time cannot repeat,
With friendly motion,
Nightly on the breast of ocean
Rock and glimmer at our feet.
(Calling).—Boy! how is it?
Boy (within).—Well, but not ripe yet, so please you, Father.
Spalatro (*to Beatrice again*).—Not all God, nor yet all devil;
Good commanding, useth evil.
Thy open casement greets communion
With the great soul of the night;
And thy spirit, held in union,
Gave it ears and gave it sight,
As each flower its breath exhaling,
Feeds the incense of the night;
So each soul its thought retailing
Tints and streaks its spirit-light—
Crossing holy aspirations,
Dreams of pain and thoughts of sin,
Shaping midnight's inspirations,
With the open air come in.
Thence our dreams their meanings borrow
From the sounds that not in vain,
O'er the shoreless wastes of sorrow,
O'er the furnace of all pain,
Quiver on the sleeping brain.

CHORUS.

For with the mist, pale dreams looked in,
Their feet were up and down upon the stair;
Her sleep as in the grave the sleep of sin,
Without a turning, yet with gasp and scare,
Broke never; for the spirits busy there,
Weighed on her will and made the awful air
Her prison—till she saw the long night out,
And had her warning and her doubt.

Spalatro.—I fain would help thee—only be thou frank.
Under the sacred seal—behold the tonsure—
[*He withdraws his cowl.*]
Thou mayst tell all; and in my ear 'tis locked
As in a kist of adamant. Besides,
My art hath told me much concerning thee.
Thou hast a lover—rogue! ah, ha!—who comes
Rowing his gondola, alone—by night,
By day—whene'er he knows old Leonardo
Is out o'the way. He loves thee well; and thou
Lov'st him. See, I know all, or next to all.
Come, daughter—hath he talked of marriage? Say.
Beatrice.—He hath.

Spalatro.— And thou'st consented ?
Beatrice.— Yes.
Spalatro.— 'Tis well—
'Tis very well ! But say the day and hour,
If he hath named them, and I'll tell thee straight
If the stars favour thee. Nay, pretty child,
Dost fear to tell me ?
Beatrice.— No, good Father, no—
Heaven knows I trust thee. He will come to-night,
At twelve o'clock, and in his gondola
Convey me where a priest shall wed us.
Spalatro.— Good !
I'm glad—I'm *very* glad. At twelve o'clock ?
No sooner, thou art sure ?—ha, well ! Alone, too ?
'Tis good. Then let me see thy hand. It is
A good hand, wench ! and fortunate ; the thumb
Is Venus, and these lines converging, good—
And this cross line quite excellent—beside,
To-day I made, for Julio Contarini,
A youth who hath a venture for to-night,
A scheme that shows the planets all conjoin
To favour, enterprise, and love this night.
There, there—'tis all *most* fortunate ! Thy dream
Was but a cheat of envious spirits grudging
Thy coming bliss ; who'd dash the interval
Although th' event they cannot mar—Most like
The youth 's impatient—champs the iron time—
And frets and spurns against the tedious hours.
Thou'lt hear of him *before* the noon of night
Unless my art beguiles me. Hie thee home—
Who knows how suddenly his hasty love
May bid him to thy door ? Away ! The stars
Befriend thee—the good spirits greet thee—go,
In fortune's name, be happy.
[*He closes his window.*]
Beatrice.— Thou good man !
Thou good Samaritan ! thou comforter !
If ever blessing followed mercy's steps,
May mine pursue thee. Now all 's bright and clear.
Joy above joy ! and I am safe as though
A radiant angel took me by the hand.
[*Exit* Beatrice.]

SCENE.

THE INTERIOR OF SPALATRO'S LABORATORY.

[*The same night and hour.*]

Spalatro.—[*Closing the window.*]
She's gone—damned little fool ! I cannot help it.
Ho, there ! Apollo ! A baiocco—quick—
From the bag there. On with thy blue tabarro—
Thy cap—and get thee down—unmoor the boat—
I join thee in a moment—and we pull
Swift for the city. 'Tis just eight o'clock ;
Give me yon nail and hammer. Get thee gone.
[*Exit* attendant.]

[Spalatro *pierces the coin with the nail, changes his cassock and cowl for a tunic and a cap and feather, buckles on a sword, and puts on a pair of shoes with roses, then with a short cloak, and gloves on, and quite disguised, he follows to the boat.*]

SCENE.

THE PIAZZETTA—ABOUT NINE O'CLOCK.

[*Saunterers, music, and laughter. Enter* Spalatro *from the quay alone; he pauses between the pillars and draws his cloak about him.*]

Spalatro.—[*Aside.*]—About this time walks Giacopo beneath
The cloister of the Doge's palace, here.
Disguised, he said, as an old Spanish merchant.
He must break tryste, and come away with me.
Lo, ha ! *there* goes a stooped and weak-kneed sage
In ruff, Toledan hat and cloak—and—ay—
How well he does it—slight ! 'Tis exquisite—
So stiff and feeble, and so lightly jolted
Out of his way, by gay-voiced youths, ha, ha !
Thou comic Death ! I have a job for thee.

[*He crosses to the arcade beneath the Doge's palace.*]

Good evening, Don Gonzales.
Giacopo.— Who ?—why ?—so !
Your reverence—in such a trim ! Zooks, sir,
You make one laugh—you make an old man laugh
Until he shakes to pieces ; ha, ha, ha !
Spalatro.—Come round the corner.

[*They walk to the quay.*]

Never mind *this* business—
Beppo can wait. Put off this masquerade,
And go upon an errand will enrich thee.
Giacopo.—What fee ?
Spalatro.— Three hundred crowns.
Giacopo.— What service ?
Spalatro.—Thou know'st Leonardo's cottage ?
Giacopo.— Ay—the place
I've tracked young Julio Contarini to—
About that pretty wench his daughter, eh ?

[Spalatro *nods.*]

And the same lady ?
Spalatro.— Ay.
Giacopo.— Oh ! *come bella !*
Spalatro.—Ay, handsome as a devil ! and her purse
So long. Come this way.

[*The clock of St. Mark's tolls the hour.*]

Tempus fugit ! Here,
Take this.—[*Gives him the baiocco*]. Come this way—nearer the water's edge.

[*They talk low for a few minutes.*]

Giacopo.—And who pays ?
Spalatro.— I—who else ?
Giacopo.— We've had some dealings.
Spalatro.—Many ?
Giacopo.—None quite so large as this. Suppose
You should forget ?
Spalatro.— Why, then you knock my brains out.
Giacopo.—Ha, ha ! I trust thee ; there's my hand.
Spalatro.— Enough.
Eleven o'clock. May fortune smile.
Giacopo. 'Tis nothing.

[Giacopo *runs down the stone steps, and springs into his gondola, rowing swiftly round to the opposite side of the city.*]

BEATRICE.

[BY HYACINTH CON'CAROLAN].

SCENE.

THE ISLAND OF TORCELLO—ELEVEN O'CLOCK—THE MOON HAS SET—THE FISHERMAN'S COTTAGE.

[*The lamp burning*—Beatrice *leaning from the window watching—she stretches her hands toward the sea*].

Beatrice.—From the dark come forth, oh! dearest.
Fold my heart unto thy breast.
Oh! poor heart, what is't thou fearest,
Why this sadness and unrest?
'Tis a change from death to life,
From a recluse to a wife;
With my love my life is spent,
And marriage is a sacrament.
Giacopo.—[*Rowing at a distance, unseen, sings.*]
Lo Merlo non a testa
Col tal-la-ral-lal-la-ral-tal-la-ral-la,
La testa non a lo Merlo—
Povero Merlo! come fara pensar?
Beatrice.—What's that?
Every little foolish thing
Startles and dismays me now.
Idle fellows always sing,
As by night they homeward row—
Rowing cheer'ly home by night,
Home to kindred and to light;
Home to kindred. Where art thou?
Mother, would I had thee nigh me,
Just to bless me as I go;
Hold the lamp, and smiling by me,
Kiss and bless me as I go.
Giacopo.—[*Nearer—he sings.*]
For jolly weddings in the town,
Laughing bells ring up and down!
With partridges and Cyprus wine,
And honey-cates, a feast divine,
Every fellow fills his skin,
Till the comely bride looks in.
Ring on finger, merry girl!
In each ear a Roman pearl;
Then to bridegroom and his lass,
Carrol we, and fill the glass.

[Beatrice *removes the lamp hastily from the window, and looks out in alarm*].
[*Giacopo's gondola enters the creek. He runs it on the shingle, and steps on the stairs*].

Giacopo—(*Beckoning, cap in hand, toward the window—softly*).—
Signora!
Beatrice.— Lo! who's there?
Giacopo.— A messenger.
Beatrice.— From whom? Oh! speak thy news.
Giacopo.— From Signor Julio.
Beatrice.—In Heaven's name, man, speak out. What hath befallen?
Giacopo.—Why, nought but good, Signora. He awaits
Thee in the chapel yonder, with a priest.
Beatrice.—Thank God! 'tis well.
Giacopo. 'Tis very well, Signora.
Here's a note.

[*She runs to the door, and he gives it to her*].

Beatrice—(Aside).— How wickedly he looked
Methought—but for a moment! What is it?
A dream! Oh Heaven! yet all too good, and still
It seems unreal, and I'm frightened.
Giacopo—(Calling).— Come!
Beatrice—(Answering).—I come, sir, I but take my beads and mantle.
(*Lower*).—Oh! happy, happy hour! God send us safe.
So near, and yet as far as Paradise,
Until thou hold'st me, Julio.
Giacopo—(Without).— Come, lady.
Beatrice—(Answering).—I come, I come, sir. Only this——

[*She places on the table, beside the lamp, a note, with these words*]:—

"Father, dearest, to-morrow I return a bride.
Forgive, and still love Beatrice. And thou
Most dear, come and live with her and her beloved."
Giacopo.— Come down,
Young woman! by the mass; or else you come
The day after the fair!
Beatrice.— Good sir, a moment.
Giacopo—[*Watching her through the window*].—She stands and prays before the crucifix—
So let her.—[*He listens seaward*].
Quiet all. And so shall I.
We all will make our peace—'tis right—some day.
All sinners. I'd a' left it long ago
If the vile skinflints would but pay fair wages.
But how's a man to live and save?
There ever is a right and wrong—and *this*
Is wrong, *quite* wrong; tho' it must come *some* way.
Fever or plague, or—bah! and so must I.
She's coming.
Beatrice.—[*Descending the steps with a small bundle in her hand and her mantle about her—in a low tone—*]
Ho! Signor Gondolier.
Giacopo.— Here—by the boat.
Beatrice.—How dark it is!
Giacopo.— Ay, lady, very dark!
Beatrice.—[*Looking up at the window—says softly—*]
Farewell!
Giacopo.—[*Assisting her into the boat.*]
There; sit where thou art.
Beatrice.— Thanks, sir.
Giacopo.—No; facing t'other way.
Beatrice.— Thanks, sir—I will. [*Changes.*]

[*He pushes off the boat and rows swiftly*].

How far is it, sir?
Giacopo.— Hold thy tongue. (*A pause.*)
How know we, girl,
Who's near? 'Tis Julio's order——
Beatrice—[*Whispering to herself*]. Yes; so dark.
He's right—he's always right. Beloved!

[*Silence, during which Giacopo rows the boat swiftly for some time*].

Giacopo.— What mean'st thou
Over thy shoulder looking still at me?
Wil't look ahead or no? We may run foul
O' something. Look ahead. Look out. (*Aside.*) I wish
She'd pray. (*Aloud.*) Hast ne'er a hymn? Come, thou *may'st*
Sing out here.
Beatrice.—What's that—an island?
Giacopo.— Ay, the Lido.

Beatrice.—Voiceless and huge. How black in the black air—
Down, like a ship forsaken, drifting on us.
Dream-haunting Lido, pass away, oh ! quickly.
Father ! mother ! shall I the roses see
Of sweet Torcello more ? To-morrow ; yes,
To-morrow. So good night, and bless me, father !
Oh ! bless your little Beatrice.

Giacopo.— Wil't sing ?
Wi'lt sing a hymn or *no?*

Beatrice.— I will. 'Tis meet, sir,
On such a night—so happy and so fearful.
May God forgive us all. Oh ! Julio, soon ;
Oh ! soon.

[*She sings.*]

As in a boat, the Lord of life—
Was ever king so lorn ?—
Among the roaring billows' strife
Slumbered, travel-worn.

The twelve Apostles did despair
Amid the storm prevailing ;
And standing round him, filled the air
With fearful words and wailing.

His face so sweet, and king-like form
Upraising at their cry,
With sign and word he stilled the storm,
And turned the billows by.

Then he reproached them lovingly
Because they did despair,
Forgetting that their friend was nigh,
And that their King was there.

And thus he is for ever nigh,
E'en when he seems to sleep ;
When seas are white, and black the sky,
My soul the Lord will keep.
(*She shrieks*) Jesu !

[*A swift blow descending with the edge of the oar, despatches her, and* Giacopo *knots a heavy stone in her dress, and throws her over the gunwale*].

CHORUS.

In a line both straight and long,
Shadowy boat and boatman dart,
Away with quivering stroke and strong
As the throbbing of a heart.

Ghostly Boatman, fleetly going
Pulling noiselessly and well,
As the Stygian spectre rowing
Fiercely through the mirk of hell ;
Sudden stopped he in the dark,
Stood to watch, and stooped to hark.
Thro' the dark and soundless hollow,
Listened to a fear that spoke not,
Scanned pursuit that did not follow,
On the deed the lightning broke not,
To her cry the thunder woke not ;
Earth and sea and sky did wait
With the apathy of fate—
Naught he saw and nothing heard,
Not a sound and not a word,
Not the skimming of a bird ;

Breathless still, with crouching stride,
Scowled he, listening far and wide.
Black and still abroad and under,
Nature seemed to gather thought;
All things seemed to pause and ponder
On the deed that he had wrought.

He headlong through the midnight flying,
Sees a palor fly before him,
Like a halo in the air.
Two eyes, not dead, but ever dying,
Back in piteous wonder stare.
He headlong through the darkness flying,
With sparry pinion smites the wave.
Bah! I saw her in the flood
Sinking to her crystal grave,
Like a sculptured maiden lying,
Like a marble splashed with blood,
Stretched and walled beneath the flood.

Evil look and evil cry!
Tho' a moment sent them by—
White in the dark her features live
The look he thought no face could give;
His brain is cold where passed that cry,
Speeding upward to the sky.

Gliding onward now he neared
The voiceless buildings of the town,
Rising shadows that appeared
Like a navy bearing down
Of ships by dead men steered.
Black against a sky of lead,
The outline of the houses gloom,
As phantoms in the day of doom,
When sun and moon are dead.

As the sea doth grope its way
Thro' the windings of a cave,
Black as ink the lazy wave,
Up that street so dark and sly,
Lapped its way with crook and croon;
While the breeze through carvings high
Went humming like a faint bassoon—
Now he backed his weary oar,
And stepped beneath his stooping door.

SCENE.

A RICH CHAMBER IN THE PALAZZO OF NERŒA.

[*Late on the evening following, one small lamp burning, Julio having, by means of a bribe, learned from Giacopo, whom he knew to be one of the Society of Venetian Bravoes, and who craftily undertook, by means of his opportunities, to unravel the mystery of her fate, what had befallen Beatrice, and who had procured her death, resolving to avenge it, visits Nerœa. Nerœa discovered alone. Enter Julio*].

Nerœa.—Oh! Julio [*rising with extended arms*].
Julio.— There—good e'en—stop there! sit down.
Nerœa.—Oh! thou art pale; thou'rt tired?
Julio.— Ay, very tired.
Nerœa.—Oh! dearest, art thou ill?
Julio.— Ill? Sick to death!

Neræa.—Nay, noble Julio, thou *art* pale!
Julio.— What! pale?
I'm not pale—There's another very pale—
No, 'tis the crimson that thine eye hath dazzled.
Neræa.—What crimson?
Julio.—[*waving his arm toward the draperies*]—This, and this—has't eyes? and all.
Thou art a Catholic, and would'st not have
A poor girl buried without bell or dirge.
There is no dirge like that the wind doth pipe;
The hoarse waves talk an honest lamentation.
A captain in my galley, when a slave
Was drown'd—'twas near the Lido, where the Doge
Sinks his ring deep; they're never found again—
Told me the ears of drowning men are filled
With peals of sweet bells, till they hear no more.
'Tis *thou* art pale.
Neræa.— Pale, Julio! I?
Julio.— Ay, pale
As funeral flames in sunshine. I am sick.
Were I a girl, I'd choose a time——
Neræa.— For what?
Julio.—To die in.
Die!
Ay, die. I'd have you drop
In your first summer, blooming, fragrant—*all;*
For with what measure thou dost mete withal,
To thee again it shall be measured. When
The first small wrinkle, like the worm of death,
Creeps on thy beauty—then all's blasted. Faugh!
Thou shalt not stay for that. I am a beast.
Neræa.—A beast! Ah, Julio! (*She laughs*).
Julio.— Ay—*viribus editior*—
By strength I took thee; thou cam'st not to me.
Dost love me?
Neræa.— Love? Oh, Julio! love and fear,
So near, and yet so strange—so loved, so awful!
Thy smile means even more than I can read,
And on thy laughter waits an echo faint
From a far place of pain and scorn. Alas!
Julio.—Dost love me?
Neræa.— Julio, to death!
Julio.— Love whom?
Neræa.—Oh! whom but Julio—thee—my Emperor!
Julio.—Nay Cæsar's image, wench, and superscription—
Gold, gold!
Neræa.— My Julio, him alone I love.
Julio.—Thou liest! Why dost thou stare? Thou *liest!*
What is to stare at? Yet I do believe
Thou lov'st thy Julio, ev'n as he loves thee.
Ha!
Neræa.—What's the matter?
Julio.— Lies.
Neræa.— Oh! cruel, cruel!
Julio.—Cruel!—as cats that toy with mice; and yet
I'll do the kindest deed to-night that e'er
The stars wept over.
Neræa.— Thou wert always kind.
Julio.—And I'll be kinder. What is life? What's good in't?
Love bleeding lies; fair truth sunk, never more
So silver clear to speak, how many fathoms,
Can'st tell, beneath the grass-green sea?

Nerœa.— Thou'rt ill,
Oh, Julio, very ill.
Julio.— No, only kind.
There—sit you still. What's life?
Nerœa.—Julio, don't talk of life.
Julio.— Of t'other thing
Mayhap. If I cried Death, and stamped my foot,
'Twould bring up—what? Ha! See'st thou nothing?
Nerœa.— No.
Why wil't thou talk so wildly, Julio?
Julio.— Ha!
Thou'rt frightened, silly bird, because 'tis dark.
It will be darker.
Nerœa.— Let me call for lights.
Julio.—Not now; I'll have them by-and-by; not now.
We hear, methinks, the clearer for the dark.
There was an old man cried—
Nerœa.— When?
Julio.— In the night—
Last night, they say—and plucked his silver locks out,
And beat his wrinkled numb-skull with his fists,
And howled as shrill and hollow as the caves
Of Æolus above the cold, wild sea.
Nerœa.—Would they brought lights!
Julio.— What's that? Ay, time enough—
Ay, lights and hands—I'll want them by-and-by.
There's something in this room to carry out.
I'm sick.
Nerœa.— I told thee thou wert ill, my Julio.
Julio.—And by a serpent wounded. I've been mad.
Held to my lips an adder's tongue, and woo'd
The coils of slimy death. Thou pretty witch,
I am no longer mad, but know thee, cold,
And dead, and damned. Thou serpent, lift thy neck
And hiss thy last at me. Dust shalt thou eat.
Thy sides are painted with the blood of her
Thou'st crushed and swallowed.—Murderous cannibal!
(*Nerœa cries wildly rushing toward him*). Off, Beldame! Judgment—ho!
Enter *Giacopo followed by another.*
Nerœa.—Mercy, Oh God!

CHORUS.

Lo where the guileless blood she planned to shed;
Her own is gliding on the polished floor;
The ambition and the jealous hate are dead,
The story of the humbler true love o'er.

The last oak of a noble forest towers
The old Faliero, silent and alone,
Disdaining, through his brief and darkening hours,
Like feebler miseries, to bend or moan.

Now, by a stranger hand the lamp is placed,
And little Beatrice no longer lights
The star he steered by on the moonless nights;
And when close-reefed across the roaring waste
And like a spirit lost, the sea-bird shrieks,
O'er breakers thundering in the shrilly winds;
By night the starless boat his wild home seeks,
His eye at last the soulless beacon finds,
Thrills to his heart the ray of other years
Starred dimly in the dark by gathering tears.

In summer evenings when the isles grow dim,
And seas float silvery round the darkened shore,
The loved voice breathes no more the distant hymn,
The laughing sweet-voiced welcome in the door,
The loving prattle and the glad surprise,
When down the rocky stair the true step flies
To meet him at the gunwale by the shore,
That laughing, loving welcome as of yore,
Like song and dance, will come again no more.

The cold sea breaks along the pebbles there,
The door is dark—the stair is but a stair—
And through the straggling roses weeds wave high,
And summer breezes wildering rock and sigh.

FENIANISM.

An amount of attention has been bestowed upon the Fenian conspiracy out of all proportion to the strength and completeness of the actual preparatory measures of the plotters—at least in Ireland. Among the documents put in evidence during the trials were some which seem to show that the originators meant to "unfurl the green flag" on Irish soil before the close of the year, and various dates between the 29th of September and Christmas Day were mentioned in those rumours, which are sometimes truthful foreshadowings, as the day of the rising. Nevertheless, the Irish enrolments of Fenians, the drillings of men, and even the appearance in the country of American commissioned and non-commissioned officers, supposed to have crossed the ocean with revolutionary objects, did not amount to serious arrangements for an immediate rebellion. But the organization was much more formidable, much more mature, and much more widely-spread and subtle, than the public at first conceived. The information of the Government as to its character appeared to justify precautions which would hardly have been resorted to for any political purpose that could be served by magnifying such a combination. The game of deliberate exaggeration would be a highly dangerous one for any Ministry to play. England will not easily admit to Foreign Powers that there is insurrection within her borders. Such an admission with respect to Ireland is reproach enough, but in this case the confession was necessary that the English manufacturing towns also had their Fenian "circles," and it was only under the compulsion of circumstances that such a fact was acknowledged. The truth is this simply, that although the Fenians went no nearer overturning the Government, and establishing an Irish Republic, than did the Mitchels and Meaghers of 1848, and could have done little harm even if they had got the length of placing their "sunburst" on the summit of some ruined Munster keep, their Society was the skeleton of a much more serious attempt to create insurrection in Ireland, and thereby to facilitate invasion by a Foreign Power, than was ever before designed by the haters of the Saxon. The idea on which it was founded made it dangerous. This was, that England and America might be embroiled in war by a proper disposition and use of Fenian-Irish strength in the United States; and that in the course of that struggle, sure to be a desperate one, "Ireland's opportunity" would arrive. That idea cannot be described as altogether a romantic one. Until lately it was only too likely that such a war might soon occur. The seeds of it existed, and evil-minded men industriously fostered them. The claims of the Americans against us for the depredations, as they call them, of the Confederate cruisers, were asserted before the conclusion of the campaign in Virginia in a tone so determined and so offensive, that the Irish in the States might reasonably build upon the probability of a quarrel which only the sword could settle. To be ready for that crisis they established their machinery of circles, centres, lecturers, collectors of weapons, symbols, and secret oaths. In furtherance of that intention they levied contributions from a population which has had added to its original unreasoning detestation of England the further stimulus of a love for republican institutions. Large sums of money were obtained, the fanatical spirit was excited, and the accident that there were *experienced* insurrectionary chiefs in America to give the scheme form and importance, completed the plot. Whether James Stephens or John O'Mahony should be considered the author and mainspring of the organization is still undetermined, but both had received an education in the business of rebellious agitation from their youth—both had the motive of making a living in the way adventurous spirits desire, in addition to the native delusion, that they might figure conspicuously in the world—both had passed through many vicissitudes, as they would say in the service of fatherland, and had a history to appeal to in support of their claims to lead in her revolutionary career. These two persons were readily trusted, and Stephens, the abler, seems to have undertaken the more exciting and more dangerous part of the work, of which Ireland was the scene. The Americans, also, while they needed men for their Southern war, and found it hard to get then even by the conscription, encouraged the Fenian Brotherhood; and it is certain that thousands of Irishmen entered the Northern army with the notion that they might thus become prepared for the ultimate and more glorious task of redeeming "Erin of the Streams." It is true that there were none of the materials for so gigantic an operation as the conveyance of a Grand Army across the ocean to invade Ireland, but the Celtic imagination has always, on this subject, taken the visions of the poet for facts at least half accomplished, and has dwelt upon the hysterical rhetoric of a venal platform, until the people have fancied all the nauseous boasts of their resistless strength sober truth. And just as, on the American side of the ocean, the attitude of the transatlantic Government, necessary perhaps in its circumstances, inflated the Fenian leaders with wild notions of their power and opportunity; so in Ireland, the impolitic conduct of the authorities in permitting such a procession through the streets of Dublin as that of M'Manus' bones, avowedly an American Republican celebration, and more lately such another as that of the O'Connell foundation-stone ceremonial, perverted as it was into an offensively sectarian demonstration, induced among the Fenians in the States and the Fenians in Ireland alike, the conviction that the British Government had grown feeble and timorous—a conclusion which may be traced both in the private letters of the sentenced conspirators to each other, and in scores of articles, epistles and songs, in the columns of the *Irish People*. This, shortly, is the history of Fenianism: how it obtained, within a comparatively short space of time, so great a hold as it has been found to have had upon the lower classes, and the class just above them—of workmen, shopmen, and clerks—despite its hostility to the priesthood as political leaders, will be worth a word of explanation.

The Irish priesthood placed themselves in the position of leaders in the politics of their flocks before Emancipation. In that measure they were as much concerned as the lay population, and their political action was so far natural. When the Relief Act had been obtained, however, they did not retire within their proper spiritual sphere, but having found their power in politics sought new uses for it. Then arose the Repeal agitation; and down to 1847 the ecclesiastics controlled it, through Daniel O'Connell. The people, however, becoming wearied of its shameless hypocrisy, the Young Ireland party sprang up and hasted to the brink of the precipice which the Old Irelander had craftily kept at a fair distance. When the revolt of 1848 was suppressed, an entire change occurred in the disposition of the clerical forces in politics. A prelate was sent to Ireland with the distinct mission of preventing priests from mingling in political matters as the conscience of the individual dictated, and to gather all the threads of the political web into the hands of the Bishops of the Church, who should be themselves in direct communication with and subjection to Rome. This policy was provided for, in the first instance, by appointing to vacant bishoprics, not the priests chosen by their fellows as the most worthy, but those best fitted for the Roman policy of a centralization of influence. From the year 1852 to the present time the effort has been steady and to an extent successful, to withdraw political power equally from the Roman Catholic people of the upper and lower classes, and from the inferior priesthood. The more educated Roman Catholic section of the community, has, unhappily, submitted to this ejection from their proper position, and may be said to be now without a will or voice in Ireland, one provincial newspaper only recording an occasional protest against the encroachments by the prelates on public liberty; but the lower classes and general body of the Roman Catholic people have grumbled openly against their bishops, and would not have given Fenianism welcome had they not despised the political position taken up by the Episcopacy, and profoundly distrusted its schemes. Strange, and yet strictly true is it to say, that the main attraction of the Fenianism of the *Irish People* to the Irish population was its weekly attack on, and its scathing exposure of the hollowness of the Prelates' agitations. Dr. Cullen was its standing jest—all the weapons of ridicule and sarcasm were employed against his pastorals, by Roman Catholics writing for Roman Catholics; and the more the *Irish People* mocked his grotesque compositions, and ridiculed his pretended authority in temporals, the more largely did it circulate, even in the rural districts—the more eagerly and approvingly was it read at forge-fire and in wayside public.

These facts, well known in Ireland, have to be proclaimed for distant readers, and should be pondered by statesmen. To press the matter of an essay into a sentence,—nothing can be more foolish than to imagine that the ingrained discontent of the Irish population, produced by a generation-long course of agitation, conducted by ecclesiastics who promised every peasant wealth without labour, as the fruit now of Repeal, again of Tenant-right, and again of some worse delusion, can be rooted out by endowing those ecclesiastics with larger powers, and supplying them with public money. The people will have no benefit from these concessions, as it is the habit to call them, and will regard them as advantages obtained by the priesthood in the way of reward for acting as a mere Government police. The estrangement which is now so remarkable a feature in Irish affairs will become, if that policy is adopted, much more serious and troublesome. The priests, in fine, have it not now in their power to pacify the people whom they have excited. What must be done may best be done independently of them, by treating the population in a liberal spirit, and dealing with them directly, and through no clerical intervention.

The more deeply the subject is reflected upon the closer will the bearing of these observations be found to be upon the Fenian episode, and its moral and lesson on the fittest future imperial policy in Ireland. The considerations suggested in pursuing such a line of thought cannot be here elaborated, but the conscientious student of public affairs will have little difficulty in following them out; and as, when Parliament meets, even with all the interest attaching to a Reform Bill, the difficulties with America, and the troubles in Jamaica, the question of How Ireland shall be treated henceforth, will instantly press, this study cannot be pretermitted.

The first disappointment encountered by the Fenian Society in America was the sudden conclusion of the campaign in the Southern States without the outbreak of a war with England, and the consequent unanticipated enunciation by Mr. Johnson of a peace policy. It was felt that the "opportunity" had again slipped away. O'Mahony and Stephens still stood on the river's brink, waiting for the stream of England's good luck to flow past, with no prospect of seeing the "old hulk" (one of their own phrases) stranded. It was then that Stephens energetically exclaimed, "The flag must be raised this year, or not at all." His efforts redoubled. The life of the organization was suddenly quickened. Matters were being brought rapidly to some sort of crisis—the council of American officers in Dublin indicated so much—when the Irish Executive, opportunely as we think (whether by artful plan or happy accident), arrested the principals in the conspiracy, and seized the *Irish People*, appealing to the ordinary tribunals of the country for justification of those bold measures. An earlier interference with the organization might have been followed by a miscarriage of justice, and the encouragement and extension of the plot; and to have delayed longer might have been to mark the year 1865 with a blood-stain in the annals of the Empire. Their conduct, in all its parts and phases will no doubt be assailed in the House of Commons; but it is hard to see how the orator most sweeping in his charges, and most careless of their effect on opinion in Foreign countries, will be able to find, either in the seizure of the *Irish People*, or in the management of the subsequent trials by the Crown lawyers, or by the presiding judges, any effective ground for attack. The more respectable of the prisoners themselves acknowledged, before receiving sentence, that their trials had been fairly conducted, that the prosecutors did not enter upon their work in a vindictive spirit, or press unduly against the accused the formidable powers of the law of conspiracy—nay more, that the various charges of Mr. Justice Keogh and Mr. Justice Fitzgerald to the juries were entirely unexceptionable. A stronger proof still of the moderation of the Crown is the fact that no occasion was given, no pretext afforded, for out-of-doors sympathy with the prisoners among a population by no means without disposition to regard them in the light of martyrs. The moral effect of a Special Commission nominated in such a crisis is its principal use, and in this instance the people have seen the Fenians justly treated, both in the composition of juries and in the presentation of evidence. The only tendency towards a prejudgment of their cases, and the creation of an excitement among the public calculated to embarrass a defence, was recognised by themselves in the objectionable tone of a section of the press, whose antecedents are those of a pungent Young Irelandism, and whose agitations prepared the country for the reception of Fenianism.

These considerations suggest a hope that the Fenian outburst is the last feeble flicker of treason in Ireland. It cannot fail to have been remarked that the principals, and even some of the minor actors, were persons who had been connected either with the rising of 1848, or the abortive scheme of ten years later in the counties of Cork and Kerry. A perfectly new race of Meaghers, Mitchels, O'Briens, and Stephenses has not sprung up. The younger generation have the native taste for plots and stratagems, but unless organized by the older class of conspirators they would never have hatched a project of insurrection. Those professional conspirators have been removed from the scene quietly, effectively, and, as has been said, in such a way as not to make them seem heroic. The prospect of peace from all mad Celts for the future is, therefore, reasonably good. It is true that Stephens has escaped, as he did in 1848, and again in 1858, and lives for flight another day, and the loss of the individual principally, and in a sense solely guilty, is a disappointment, and even a serious blow; but the band of persons who represented the traditions of 1848, and had the title of many sufferings and dangers unselfishly encountered, to plead with the people whom they sought again to lead, having been finally broken up, the Young Irelandism, which reappeared with a changed face as Phœnixism, and again as Fenianism, has probably received a mortal wound at last. But the victory of the Government is one which may be utterly spoiled in their mode of dealing with it; and herein lies the danger of the moment. That victory has been secured—the statement cannot be made too emphatically—by the help of the whole body of the loyal community, men of all creeds, classes, and positions in society. A large majority of the small farmer class have been as loyal as those above them. Fenianism has been rendered abortive by the exertions of no ecclesiastical body. To say that it has been put down by the Roman Catholic priesthood, in the sense of claiming for them any particular power over it, is not only to make an assertion contrary to fact, but to provoke inquiries which those ecclesiastics can ill afford as to their responsibility for the gloomy and irrational hatred of the Government and institutions of the country which their teaching has infused into the people. Fenianism was simply a case of their agitations recoiling upon themselves, just as Emigration was long since pointed out in these pages to be much more largely the fruit of a preaching of discontent from altars, than of landlord evictions, or the poverty of the country. There is a disposition apparent among a certain party—persons as fiercely prejudiced and as ignorant of Ireland as Mr. Bright—to consider Irish disaffection a mischievous spirit, more rife than ever, which can only be allayed by appeasing the monstrous appetite of those ecclesiastics for power and command of the public money; and that disposition is sure, during the approaching Session, to influence the conduct of the "advanced section" of the Ministerialists, on the one side, and of the shortsighted admirers and thick-and-thin supporters of their rival in the competition for Ultramontane votes, Mr. Disraeli, on the other. This is the blunder that is probable—the danger to be apprehended. If such a blunder is committed, if such a danger is madly braved, Ireland's pacification will be postponed for another twenty years. Place the Roman Catholic bishops in the ascendant, and you disgust the Roman Catholic people, and compel the Protestants to assume an attitude of persevering opposition to Ministries. The policy of ministering to Roman domination will have the certain result of producing greater social disorganization than has yet been known in Ireland, and of creating for future governments embarrassments compared with which all present troubles are but trifles. It would be easy to show that this is no haphazard prophecy. The several stages of such a consequence, the cause being supposed, might be traced as confidently, from the dictate of experience, as if a page of history were being written. When, in a word, in any country, did the giving of undue influence, wealth, and patronage, to an extreme party of Papal bishops, cause anything but confusion? We look to such men as Mr. Lowe, Mr. Horsman, and Sir Robert Peel, Lord Elcho, and others who have joined their perhaps small, but, under present circumstances, powerful force, for protection from the retrograde policy for which the Fenian plot is to be made the pretext. Those energetic, able, and independent persons will lay the Moderate Party in Ireland, a large and an increasing one, under lasting obligations if they shall save us from new discords by resisting an Ultramontane revolution scarcely less ruinous than a Fenian one, and by insisting that Ireland shall be governed on principles at least as liberal as are applied to a purely Catholic community like Italy, where a state of peace was only approached when the usurped sceptre of priestly rule in matters temporal was broken in pieces. Surely a British Parliament will not suffer Ireland to be made as Papal politically as Naples was before Bomba the Younger took flight. The negotiations which are understood to be in progress between the party in the Government who have not a whit of Lord Palmerston's sagacity or courage, suggest but too plainly that a course may be attempted to be taken in contradiction of all British principles—a course which will disgrace our political history if it be adopted; and the crisis is so grave that every rational man's help is needed to prevent the dark intrigue from succeeding. The Ultramontane Prelates seem to have everything in their hands. They no doubt think the ball at their foot. But the large proportions of their reactionary project and its certain issues have only to be made apparent to the English public to gain for any political leader who flings himself into the breach in defence of the Constitution, and of a wise and enlightened policy towards Ireland, such support from the public as will shatter all subtle and secret schemes, and drive the Ministry who may harbour them from the position they have abused.

THE OPENING SESSION.

The first Session of the Parliament elected in 1865 in all probability will be the most important sitting of the nation's Representatives since the period of the repeal of the Corn Laws. It is true that on former occasions this pre-intimation has been made apparently on fair grounds, and the debates of the year have proved, nevertheless, very stupid, and little business of moment has been done. During the next few months, however, it will be impossible to avert a serious conflict of parties, with effects, for good or evil, extending far forward into the political future of the country. It has been announced that the Government mean to introduce such a Reform Bill as satisfies Mr. Bright. It has been stated almost as positively that they intend to attempt anew the impossible achievement of conciliating the extreme Roman Catholic party in Ireland by gifts; and out of these two undertakings, besides the special difficulties of administration which Ministers have on hands, there ought to spring strife enough. We may be permitted in these pages to state certain facts, and present a few reflections, which should be, as we think, present to the minds of those who take a real interest in politics, at the opening of a Session whose character is, so far, defined beforehand.

It must be apparent to every one that the Government which is about to attempt the large tasks we have indicated will not have the advantage of overwhelming personal influence or ability in carrying its measures through the House of Commons. With the single exception of Mr. Gladstone, it has no first-rate man. Sir George Grey and Mr. Cardwell are dull respectables at the best. Mr. Layard is chagrined at being passed over on a late occasion, when a Cabinet vacancy occurred, and at his happiest moment is dangerously combative. In Irish matters, Mr. Chichester Fortescue will be courteous and adroit; but where is the Palmerston to support him as the deceased chieftain did Sir Robert Peel so boldly and so well? The great ado Lord Russell's organs have made about the young man, Mr. Goschen, shows how much poverty in the higher order of talent there is among the Ministerial company. When Mr. Goschen was first introduced into the Government as the occupant of a subordinate place, the step seemed to have been taken with a view of pleasing the Radical section, rather than from a paucity of competent men on the Russell list of illustrious unpromoted; but when Mr. Goschen, before he had stepped into his place, was raised suddenly over his older competitors, and dragged into the Cabinet itself, as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, it became manifest that the Premier's range of selection was very limited, and his political friends of standing fewer than had before been imagined. The Member for the City of London is a very clever, but necessarily an inexperienced man, and the whole burden of sustaining the Government will fall upon Mr. Gladstone. Great as his powers are, and much as he may control his temper (his flatterers promise in this respect a great deal), a Ministry depending so much upon an individual is not in good case. If Earl Russell had any of the qualities of Lord Palmerston, his prospects would be better; but for almost every excellence of the late Premier's character, the present First Minister's character has a corresponding defect. Lord Palmerston was genial: Lord Russell is petulant. Lord Palmerston never held out obstinately, although in the right, when the House and the Country did not see that he was so: Lord Russell is obstinate at all times, and most obstinate in small matters not worth contending about.

As regards its personal element the Government has yet another weakness, in the support which it is to receive from the Member for Birmingham. Already Mr. Bright's speeches in Earl Russell's favour have done the Cabinet serious injury; and what harm could the burly demagogue do to the Ministry on a platform outside, compared with the mischief he will do within the House, when he rises to sustain the propositions of the Government on Reform, on the ground that, though they do not go as far as manhood suffrage, they are a stage on the road to it, and have been accepted by the Radical party distinctly and specifically as part of something more to come? Mr. Bright will in all likelihood be *the* difficulty of the Government of Earl Russell during the progress of the Session. Such irritating and irrational orations as he delivered lately against the Conservative policy which prevailed in England throughout the first half of the century, such unmeasured language as he has employed on the Jamaica matter, and such extreme doctrines as he has propounded with reference to the policy proper to be pursued in Ireland, will be admirably calculated to band together against the Ministry all men of reasonable opinions and strong sense. The nature of the bargain made by Lord Russell with Mr. Bright has not transpired. Rumour has asserted that he was offered a seat in the Cabinet. Some aver that he has been placated simply by this pledge that the Reform Bill shall be put forward as what Daniel O'Connell used to call an "instalment of justice." Be that as it may, Lord Russell's gain by the compact would be much greater if he could only induce Mr. Bright to confine his support of the Ministry for the next three months to the giving of a silent vote.

Lord Russell's Government being thus weak in its composition, let us ask how it stands with regard to the bulk of the Liberal members? Are they true to its colours? Is there widespread disaffection among them? On this point it is not possible to speak otherwise than conjecturally. No one can dogmatize as to the character and course of a new Parliament. There are some things, nevertheless, plain enough, and very significant also. When the Elections had ended, the Ministerial journals boldly claimed a majority of thirty. Had Lord Palmerston lived, it is certain that this calculation would have been literally verified. He would have carried that majority with him into the lobby on any hostile motion it was possible for his adversaries to frame. But the journals we speak of never boast now of the majority of thirty, or of any majority at all. They admit that they do not know how matters will be. There has already been a great defection from the Ministerial ranks. The necessity to give the Duchy to Mr. Goschen is a sign of it. Where are the Lowes, Horsmans, Peels, Elchos, and all the vigorous men of the constitutional Whig party? They hold strictly aloof from Earl Russell. They have other speculations and other purposes than his position and policy provide. Their numbers, too, are, we hope truly, said to be increasing steadily. Their exact strength, in a total of votes, we cannot for some time know; but their power must not be measured by that standard alone. They are in sympathy with a very large body of the public, who are prepared to support them with earnestness, to magnify all they do, to coerce the hesitating to follow them, and to reward them if faithful and successful in defending the institutions of the country from the rash hands of destructives, with threefold honours.

This is the party — hardly yet formed, but containing the elements of the only victorious Opposition— which the Ministry really fear. They are not apprehensive of mischief from Mr. Disraeli as the leader in an attack. He is not in a position to assail the Government effectively on the Reform question, any more than on that of the concessions to the Ultramontanes. He himself stands pledged to a measure of Reform which Mr. Gladstone will probably be able to show went quite as far as the Bill the Ministry are about to introduce. The author of the Fancy Franchises may criticise the Russell-Gladstone scheme in its details, but he cannot make much of an opposition depending on verbal and shadowy distinctions between *lateral* and *vertical* extension. It would be easy to disarm him alone; but there are those other champions in the field—not many in number, but quite unfettered, very bold, and carrying with them the prestige of Lord Palmerston's name. The pupils of the Great Departed have a noble work, and if they only take up the task energetically, the mass of the better class of Mr. Disraeli's followers, as well as all constitutional Whigs, must needs troop round them, and leave the Member for Bucks in the naked and isolated condition in which his follies ought to have long ago left him. It has been stated by the *Morning Star*, supposed now, on account of its connexion with Mr. Bright, to be to a certain extent an authority as to Ministerial doings and apprehensions, that these men of the Middle Party mean, under the marshalling of Lord Elcho—a patriotic body of political Volunteers—to move a direct negative to the Reform Bill. It was imagined at first that they would attempt to get rid of the measure by asking the House to refer the question to a Royal Commission. But whether the latter intention is or is not abandoned, and whether the former resolution has or has not been formed, it is certain that the party of honest and plain-spoken resistance to Brightism, in all its branches and projects, will have a large degree of public sympathy, and stand a fair chance of becoming the ruling influence in British politics for a protracted period.

Besides the Reform Bill, Mr. Bright, the Dictator over Lord Russell's Government, seems to have set his heart on promoting the ascendency of Ultramontanism in Ireland. It is by making loud profession of this purpose he has secured for the Ministry those votes of Dr. Cullen's "tail," for which Mr. Disraeli made such high bids, only to be disappointed as well as disgraced. The programme of Mr. Bright and of the Roman Archbishops includes a great deal—a complete overturning of the Educational systems of the country, a Land-revolution, and the dis-Establishment of the Irish branch of the National Church. If the Middle Party are prepared to help us to resist Americanism and Papalism in these forms, they will get the earnest support of the Irish public. With Irish constitutional politicians the Church question takes at present the highest place; and it will be well to consider the position, claims, and prospects of the Irish Church, and the views of its friends, shortly.

The National Church in Ireland occupies in one obvious point of view a position very different from that which the Church holds in England, or even in Scotland. In England the Dissenters are the minority—those Dissenters who would despoil the Church of the State vastly the minority. In Scotland the Established Church has to a large extent recovered the loss sustained at the Disruption, its clergy are as highly educated, and as spiritual, as at any period in its history, and under their ministrations it is getting back its members rapidly. Neither in England nor in Scotland is the Church of the State likely to become less powerful: all the probabilities are that in ten more years it will embrace a larger proportion of the people in both countries, from the increased activity of the clergy, their closer sympathy with the laity, and the multiplication of their joint agencies. But in Ireland we admit the existence of quite another state of things. Here, the National Church is the Church of a minority, and during the last twenty years has become less so to but a small extent. What the next twenty years will do no one can say, but to the human eye the members of the Irish Church seem destined to remain almost a fixed number; and if, consequently, as a minority, the Irish Church is an "anomaly" now, it will so continue. Legislative interference with any of its rights, functions, or possessions, cannot be deprecated on the assumption that time will change the aspect of affairs by bringing over the Roman Catholic population to Protestantism. Dreams of that description, once general even in England, have been dispelled. What the Irish Church is, that is what it shall be, and its defence must be sought in some other principle than that of its numbers in a Census, in comparison with those of other religious systems. The position of its defenders is, that it forms an essential part of the Imperial United Church, and that position is constitutionally and logically sound.

To acknowledge any other principle would be politically dangerous and financially impracticable. A few Roman Catholic bishops may hold that their claim to a simple transfer of the revenues of the Protestant Church, on the ground of their adherents being four to one, will be recognised by Parliament if they only agitate loudly and long enough; but the calculation is hasty, since to denude the Irish branch of the Church of its pecuniary resources, would not only be to confiscate what is as much property as the hereditary acres of any magnate in the land, but to dismember the Empire—to declare that Daniel O'Connell, and the long line of agitators were right, and that Ireland ought not to be regarded as an integral part of the British State, but governed as if a colony removed at the farthest point in some far-off ocean. The politics of Ireland can never be so separated from those of England, now that the Channel is a ferry, and the bonds, social and commercial, which unite the two peoples, have become numerous and indissoluble. The sole alternative for British statesmen in Ireland, if change there ever should be, would be to adopt the principle of an universal Religious Endowment, which, however, would ultimately necessitate the payment of the Dissenting clergy in England and of the Free Church ministers of Scotland, as well as the priests in Ireland; or to settle down upon a complete and uniform Voluntaryism, which, as the first step towards a general overturning of the monarchical institutions under which the nation has prospered above every other in the world, would be even more sternly resisted. It seems inevitable that the Irish Church—anomaly or not—must stand: Ireland is too near to England for either of those experiments. The greatest visionary cannot imagine that Parliament, which grudges the slight additions from year to year made to the *Regium Donum*, as grants for new congregations, would largely supplement any general ecclesiastical fund out of the public taxes.

The Irish public, accordingly, expect from the Middle Party that they will support the Irish Church on constitutional principles strictly—as Sir Robert Peel, one of their number, has nobly pledged himself to do, and as Lord Palmerston, his leader, boldly did three years ago. This question, in fact, may well be made a test one with them. The Disraelite knot of "leaders" are known to be not adverse to paying the Roman Catholic priesthood, though where they are to get the money they have never condescended to say. The Radicals, on the other hand, are only anxious to abolish the National Church in Ireland, that they may be in a better position for assailing the National Church in England, in the pursuit of their plan of a wholesale American "reform." The course for a New Party is the manifest one, of treating the Roman system as exceptional in consequence of its Foreign origin and motives, and of its political character, and to refuse bluntly to admit any right on the part of the small minority of Roman Catholics in the Kingdom to ask for the subversion of the Church established by the vast majority, and for centuries the basis of our whole political structure. At the same time, the assuming of this position would not prevent the statesmen of the Constitutional party from improving the Irish Church in any points in which it is capable of improvement, so as to remove anomalies as far as may be, to render it as a machine more efficient, and to bring it into livelier sympathy than it has been for thirty years with the ruling powers. Its own dignitaries, in fact, are pointing out to the legislator who will approach the edifice with the careful hand of the Restorer—not with the sledge-hammer of an enemy—in what ways it may be renovated, and the circumstance hopefully evinces an improved tone among the clergy themselves. The laity have long been anxious for reforms, but it is only now that the necessity for them is at all acknowledged by the occupants of the pulpit. The Primate of Ireland, the Archbishop of Dublin, at least one Dean whose opinion is of some weight, and several divines of large experience, have taken part in proposing changes, exhibiting at least an unselfish desire to increase the Church's efficiency. The feeling is general among laity and clergy alike, in Ireland, that reforms ought to be forthwith undertaken—reforms which shall, for example, tend to equalize incomes among the beneficed clergy, and to raise those of small, and especially of small and populous livings, by appropriating for their use sums taken from the excessive emoluments of bishoprics and other dignities.

It has been observed that the Irish Church is "top-heavy" from an excess of dignities. Dr. Trench points to the superfluous deans, and Dr. Atkins, at the Down Conference, described his own duties, as one of them, to consist in the making of a bow to an Archbishop once in three years at a provincial synod. But the Church is top-heavy otherwise than in having useless persons sauntering idly through her fold. There is room for some more extensive reform, when a diocese is found containing only 13,800 Church inhabitants, and paying its bishop £4,400 per annum; when another, with 17,000 Churchmen, yields to the bishop £4,038 per annum; when a third bishop, having only 116 clergy to look after, receives £5,246; when a fourth, with 108 clergy, gets £5,939; when one archbishop derives from his office £8,328, and another £6,569. Considering the character of the country, and the number of the Church's members, these incomes are all too large. If the average salary of the ten Irish bishops were £2,000 per annum, they would more frequently be found following in the footsteps of the good Archbishop King, who, by his simple apostolic zeal, established above one hundred and fifty years ago that ascendency of his Church's principles in the diocese of Derry which has survived the inert administration of a later race of spiritual overseers. It is notorious that the only bishop in Ireland, besides the Archbishop of Dublin, and perhaps the Bishop of Down, who goes amongst his clergy and works hand in hand with them, is the Bishop of Cork, and his revenues are the lowest of all—£2,300 per annum. An amended table of remuneration has been suggested, which would give for the Primacy £5,000; for the Archbishopric of Dublin, £5,500; for the ten bishoprics, £3,500 each; for the principal Dublin deanery, £2,000; for eleven other deaneries, £1,000 each; for eleven archdeaconries, £700 each; and probably even this, to employ Dr. Trench's figure, is carrying too much sail. There ought to be, at all events, a sufficient sum recovered from the various dignitaries to recruit a number of the smaller benefices, and to provide for stipendiary curates. A change of the sort would set the wheels that now rust agoing, and strengthen the institution by wiping away a cause of reproach. Clearly the principle of all reforms should be to remove everything obstructive, to lighten the parts unnecessarily weighty, and to sustain those that are weaker, that the whole machine may work more easily.

It is plain, too, that if the Irish Church is to make progress there must be a franker recognition of the power of the voluntary principle as a supplementary resource. Until lately every effort to build and endow new churches by the subscriptions of the laity was treated as an innovation. That ancient and cramping notion must be finally abandoned. When one member of the Church is found to restore St. Patrick's Cathedral at an outlay of over £100,000; when a few others have established a society in Belfast which contemplates the erection of from four to six churches; when new cathedrals are being reared up in Tuam, in Cork, and in the diocese of Down, by what the Scotch Voluntaries would call the Christian willingness of the people, it would be madness to check those energies out of reverence for any theory. The churches so erected must be welcomed into the fold, and those who shall minister in them treated not as clergymen of the Establishment by sufferance, but as the equals in all respects of the parish clergyman, and entitled to a full and fair chance of promotion side by side with the incumbent more fortunate in the enjoyment of a rentcharge. Archbishop Trench has publicly acknowledged the strength of this new spirit in language worthy of attention. "A grateful evidence," he says, in his primary Charge, "of the activity of church-life in the diocese of Dublin is the number of new churches which are being built in it, or of old which, in whole or in part, are undergoing a process of renewal. In a period of less than two years I have had the satisfaction of consecrating seven new churches—six of them additions to those already existing, the seventh an old parish church rebuilt. I have also licensed for Divine service an eighth, newly erected by the Duke of Leinster. Entirely trustworthy returns acquaint us that in the diocese of Dublin there were 82 churches in 1791, and 91 in 1826. It is satisfactory, as far as church-building is concerned, to have made in less than two years very nearly as much progress as was made half a century ago in 35." And it is certain that the free efforts and offerings of the laity would be multiplied, if the paralysing consciousness that the revenues of the Church are unfairly distributed were removed from the public mind, and if other such crying abuses as clerical non-residence were done away with. Of the 1,500 holders of livings in Ireland there are 205 who do not reside in their parishes—who delegate their duties to ill-paid curates, and carry off considerable incomes to be spent elsewhere. In one diocese, that of Cork, out of a total of 170 clergy, as many as 41 stand in the category of the non-resident. In Limerick diocese there are 93 livings, with 23 non-residents; in Cashel, 107 livings, with 32 wandering shepherds. An absentee landlord is bad enough; but an absentee clergyman is much worse.

While work so extensive and so useful remains to be done it will not be open to any one to say that the Parliamentary Party which shall come forward for the defence of the Irish Church is necessarily opposed to reform. All that Irish Churchmen and Conservatives expect, as the condition on which their support will be given to a new English constitutional Ministry, is that the institution of the National Church in Ireland shall be declared perpetual, and its property sacred for its own religious uses. There will be no objection to any measure calculated to render it more efficient. The Middle Party will find it their account, as we believe, to profess so much. Let them defeat the Ministry of Lord Russell on the Reform Bill—and defeat on such a measure must be followed by immediate resignation—and let them pledge themselves to such a support of the institutions of the country as a maintenance of the Irish Church, and the protection of Irish society against Ultramontanism, would emphatically signify, and the reins of government must pass into their hands, in all probability to be held by them for a lengthened period. They have thus given to them really a great opportunity: it remains to be seen "What they will do with it."

THE REFORM BILL OF 1866.

WHATEVER shall be the fate of the Reform Bill of Earl Russell's Ministry,—we commence this article whilst the lists are still open and the struggle proceeding,—it may with confidence be said that no measure of high constitutional importance has ever been more fully or more ably discussed. The last Parliament under the old Franchises which have served so well for over thirty years—if it is to be the last—has shown great vigour and conscientiousness. Perhaps never before, in a great political crisis, was there less of the spirit of faction, or more general independence of judgment or earnestness of purpose exhibited by the House of Commons. Although party ties have been as powerful as on other occasions to hold the crowd of the rank and file together under their respective chiefs, among the leading thinkers the higher considerations of public duty have operated powerfully, and the fetters of names and associations have been cast off, and the course manfully taken which strong convictions dictated and the national interests seemed to demand. It is this feature which chiefly gives moment to a prolonged debate that will occupy a prominent place in the history of political warfare, and it will be well to mark how such a development of an unwonted parliamentary independence is accounted for.

It will not be sufficient to refer it to the idiosyncracy of one or more individuals whose bold example stimulated others. Without denying that the country owes a vast deal to the men—few but brave and competent—who have resisted Revolution in the name of Reform, and before pointing more particularly to what they actually have done, let us look at the deeper influences which they have obeyed, and trace to its origin that constitutionalism which they have arisen to represent at the instant when their help was needed.

It does not appear that those persons, right though they be in a degree, go to the root of the matter, who attribute the spirit of resistance to ill-considered change manifested by a Liberal section of representatives to the surviving, for a time, of Palmerstonian ideas; for Lord Palmerston's policy was admittedly the creation of a public opinion in favour of constitutional repose, and not the cause of it. The man, great as he was, was less than the influence which he obeyed. Nor is it imputable to what has been called by many in a narrow party sense a conservative reaction. Mainly it is due to the double cause, that the people at large have long been satisfied with the working of the parliamentary machine, and have not scrupled to say so; and that those who, for party or other designs, have desired to remodel it, have proclaimed their purpose lately in a manner more open, more daring, and more alarming, than even the intelligent class of working men can bear. The great body of operatives, enfranchised and unenfranchised alike, have given proof that they are satisfied, and hence the signal failure of agitators among them; but, partly from a wish never to acknowledge finality in a progressive State, partly because Reform was a familiar idea, they have given that sort of apathetic sanction to the projects of their supposed friends which has puzzled and thwarted the Ministry.

The *rationale* of this apathy was unexplained until the electoral statistics appeared. It was then seen that the working men are fairly represented, and that in some places they have even the command of the constituencies. They had felt this themselves. They saw no anomaly. They were conscious of no disability, and it was impossible to persuade them that they had a grievance. These facts, which are entirely indisputable, are the stable basis of the position which the men of the Middle Party have taken up.

This Middle Party, first so entitled in these very pages, the party which Mr. Bright ridiculed when he favoured the House with his Scotch-terrier illustration, and to the strength and ability of which Earl Russell wished to shut his eyes, when, at the meeting of his supporters, he disputed its existence, we spoke of in our February number, before the Session opened, as constituted by a serious defection from the Ministerial ranks, and added: "This is the party—hardly yet formed, but containing the elements of the only competent Opposition—which the Ministry really fear. They are not apprehensive of mischief from Mr. Disraeli as the leader in an attack. He is not in a position to assail the Government on the Reform question. He himself stands pledged to a measure of Reform which Mr. Gladstone will probably be able to show went quite as far as the Bill the Ministry are about to introduce . . . It would be easy to disarm him alone; but there are those other champions in the field—not many, perhaps, in number, but quite unfettered, very bold, and carrying with them the prestige of Lord Palmerston's name. The pupils of the great departed have a noble work, and if they only take it up energetically, the mass of Mr. Disraeli's followers must troop round them. It is certain that the party of honest and manly resistance to Brightism, in all its branches and projects, will have a large degree of public sympathy, and stand a fair chance of becoming the ruling influence in British politics for a protracted period." In this passage we have not a word to alter. Everything that has since occurred corroborates the view then taken of the more immediate political future. The Palmerstonian contingent have proved themselves a potent parliamentary force—powerful in their principles, in the support they have received from the press and from the public, and in the ability which they have manifested in debate. In some form or other, whether as a section of a coalition Ministry, or as an independent Opposition, they must henceforward exert an influence upon English legislation which no mere eloquence of the over-wordy order will countervail. That influence, too, must be, on the whole, salutary; for whatever may be the opinions of the politicians to whom we refer on other matters, they are to the core sound on the constitutional principle that the balance of political power among the various classes of society shall be preserved. If the passing of the Franchise Bill should destroy this balance, they will apply themselves to the task of restoring it by further legislation, in connexion with the re-arrangement of seats or otherwise. They can be depended upon throughout as anti-American, to use the phrase which will in the shortest way convey their position and characteristics.

It is one of the most remarkable features of the crisis through which the country is passing, that the ablest and most influential of our journalists are on the side of this party of Moderates. There are persons who will plume themselves on discovering causes for this of a different kind from those that are manifest, and the significance of which it is proper to indicate. We confess ourselves, however, to be of those who consider that an honest desire to uphold and condemn, according as conscience and the country's interests require, animates the leading journals enjoying the public confidence. This desire was never more palpably dominant than now, and never before were the public more ready to acknowledge the fact, and grant to the reasonings of their daily counsellors the attention to which such a conviction prompts. Should the Reform Bill be defeated in its present shape, the press may fairly claim in large measure the credit of the victory. It is very questionable whether the Liberal members, who have opposed it would have had courage for the course they adopted, or having entered upon would have persevered in it, but for the ready appreciation their principles found in the daily journals, and the able and constant justification of their conduct volunteered by those who disinterestedly approved it, and discerned with quick and practised eye that it was far more in accordance with the convictions of the people than the democracy of Mr. Bright, which is without defined limits, and means universal suffrage if it means anything.

The more clearsighted of public writers, professing heretofore to be of the Liberal party, have perceived that the change in the character of that party proposed to be effected by Mr. Gladstone would be its ruin, and the desire to avert that consummation has operated to influence their conduct. England might for a short period become enamoured of Radicalism, might fall under the influence of the stupid delusion that Mr. Bright is a great prophet, and the £7 voter a philosophic politician, whose sagacity has hitherto been denied to the councils of the State to its vital injury; but no one can suppose that this affection for Radicalism would last. And when it gave way, where would the Liberal party be if Earl Russell and Mr. Gladstone had been permitted to turn the full stream of its influence into the Birmingham channel? The English public would be compelled in that event to reject the Liberal party as debased—to put it from them as a guilty thing; and the result would be the establishment of a purely Conservative Ministry, to last as long as the remembrance lasted of the peril from which the nation had escaped. The Liberals who did not wish to see their party destroyed had no alternative but to denounce Mr. Gladstone, who had proposed to swamp it with the Radicalism of Mr. Bright; and accordingly, nothing could be truer or more effective than the statement of Lord Grosvenor, that Mr. Gladstone was the real traitor, the deserter from Liberal principles, the leader who had insulted his followers by endeavouring to set up a new flag instead of the old one to which alone they owed allegiance; and nothing could be more audacious than the charge made by the leader of the House of Commons against the true Liberals of having been false to the colours whose honour they have been in reality maintaining. The course of the debate on the Reform Bill tended powerfully to justify the Liberal Opposition as the Liberal party proper, and when the mists have cleared away, and the argument comes to be made by the political historian without heat or prejudice, Mr. Gladstone will be described as the worst friend the Liberal party ever had—as the Minister who, with two roads before him, to make choice between, notwithstanding that he had the experience of so sound a man as Lord Palmerston for his guidance, chose the wrong road, and strove intemperately and vainly to drag an unwilling party after him in his fatal error.

The conviction is growing, and we may claim to have done our part to foster it, that whether the Ministry get over the difficulty of the second reading of the Reform Bill or not, the country can only be rescued from the peril into which they have brought it by a combination of Conservatives of the more liberal, and Whigs of the less radical, order. We of course bear in mind the old saying that "England hates coalitions," but the coalitions which England has reason to hate were coalitions of convenience, in which there were no common sympathies and no real bonds of union. The case before us is different. If the persons come together into a new and strong party of whom we speak they will have been compacted under a powerful necessity, compelling men to act together because their *principles* are the same, and because those principles are gravely imperilled. The Ministry, which should thus be formed, would be at once more Conservative and more Liberal than its precursor, and accordingly more English and more enduring. The only danger would be the doubt whether leading men unaccustomed to act together, and ignorant of each other's tempers and views on general subjects, would be able to avoid all personal altercation, and consent to make sufficient reciprocal sacrifices; but this sort of difficulty has to be encountered whenever new blood is brought into a Ministry, and under a politic and conciliatory chief petty disputes ought to be easily restrained. It is pretty woll known that, should it become necessary for the Queen to consult Lord Derby, he will decline to take office. He is constitutionally unfitted for the position, and his health not equal to it. The noble lord would advise Her Majesty, no doubt, to apply to some statesman of experience who would command, at least by the respect entertained for his character, the confidence of the country, adding the expression of his belief that a Ministry composed to some extent of men heretofore sitting on different sides of the House, is the necessity of the political situation. This view of the course to be taken acceded to, and the principal selected, all the rest would be practicable enough. The Middle-party men, when in power, would command much more than a sufficient number of Liberal votes to place Mr. Gladstone and the Radicals in a safe minority; and there would be no reason that a Government so constructed and supported should not last out the full term of a parliament.

We may remind the public, further, that in the pages of the UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE, when briefly recording the death of the late wise and good Premier, we strongly recommended the immediate formation of a Palmerston Club in tribute to his memory, and to sustain and perpetuate his wisely balanced principles, under the application of which to its domestic affairs the nation prospered, the people were content, and such agitations as the present Ministers have endeavoured to create were unknown. Without some such organization the strength of the new party will not be readily ascertainable. It will otherwise have no clear rallying-point. Since we then wrote, short as is the time that has elapsed, many mists have been cleared away. Much that was thought at that time almost romantic in idea is plain fact now. There can no longer be any dispute as to the existence of a powerful Palmerstonian influence in Parliament, and the propriety of establishing a new club, of the character we indicated, is admitted. With respect to the name, we still press that the word "Palmerston" would carry a distinct idea, and be acceptable not only to those who would join a Middle Party, but to the nation. It would be a guarantee that the country would not seek in vain for the services of a body of representatives competently and boldly led, who would never stoop to seek popularity by sacrificing the interests of the whole people to those of a class, even the largest numerically, or endeavour to retain office by the arts of the demagogue.

LORD DUFFERIN ON IRELAND.

WHAT Lord Dufferin modestly styles "Contributions to an Inquiry into the State of Ireland"* offers in reality the results of a most industrious and sagacious scrutiny into that abstruse and melancholy subject. The theme is not, indeed, altogether melancholy; for, as we shall presently show, there are openings and gleams evidently brightening and expanding of a happier future. These vigorous symptoms and expansions of a new life are carefully noted by Lord Dufferin, and placed in the great national balance-sheet against the waste and mischiefs inflicted by Fenianism. We are to bear in mind, however, that the improvement of Ireland has been proceeding with the steady and cumulative action of an established law, while the disturbing influence which has thrown us back during the last ten months is simply one of those occasional checks to which all national processes are in one form or another liable. The spirit of active disaffection which, either in the background of agitation or in the van of insurrection, has been the great curse of Ireland, is rapidly wearing itself out, and its decline alike in intelligence and in volume is described by Lord Dufferin in one of his happiest passages. "What we are now enduring," he says, "seems to be like the last onward rush of a retiring tide, of which the first great wave broke in 1798, enveloping even the higher ranks of society within its vortex. When in 1848 it again returned, its energy was already checked, and scarcely reached the level of the middle classes; while now, with what appears to be an expiring effort, it whirls along in its destructive embrace none but the most ignorant and reckless of the lower orders."

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* "Contributions to an Inquiry into the State of Ireland." By the Right Hon. Lord Dufferin, K.P. London: John Murray, Albemarle-street. 1866.

Lord Dufferin cites proof for every allegation he makes. When he says that Fenianism has seriously though but temporarily affected industrial enterprise in Ireland, he gives us particular instances in support of his statement. He says:—

> "To any one who has been observing the march of events in Ireland during the past few years, one of the most hopeful symptoms will have been the commencement made in almost every direction of the application of British capital to enterprise in Ireland. Within my own knowledge in more than a dozen centres this expenditure had begun or was on the point of beginning. But what has happened since? Disaffection showed her hateful countenance, and every single operation was abandoned. Within three miles of my own house a company had been formed at the beginning of last year, for the purpose of investing a million and a half of capital in a building speculation. They had actually committed themselves to this undertaking by the payment of the earnest-money to the owner of the land; but the rumours of disturbance were heard, and, rather than pursue their enterprise, the shareholders agreed to forfeit the few thousands already sunk, and the whole of this enormous expenditure was lost to the country. Again, a gentleman, now in the House of Commons, the son of a native of Drogheda, having made his fortune in Manchester, out of a feeling of affection for his father's birthplace, determined to return to that city, and establish a factory. In consequence of the cheapness of labour and the mildness of the climate—frost being an appreciable drawback to cotton spinning—the experiment was so successful that last year three or four of this gentleman's former Manchester associates had actually come to Drogheda, in order to prepare for the introduction of similar establishments; but Fenianism broke out, and they have abandoned their intentions.
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> "Then, with regard to the depreciation of property. A friend of mine had sold an estate in the Landed Estates Court. The purchaser, however, was not in a position, when the time came for the payment of the money, to perfect the purchase. The estate was again put up, but in the meantime Fenianism appeared, and the property was sold for half the former price.
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> "The annual increasing advent of tourists is a matter of considerable importance to the inhabitants of some of the villages in the south of Ireland. In Killarney alone, for several months in the year, the average daily number of tourists staying in the hotels and village is nearly 500, representing an expenditure of several thousands a week. But no sooner did Fenianism display itself than every traveller departed, and during the whole of the latter part of last autumn scarcely a dozen people ventured to go there. The Great Southern and Western Railway is paying 5 per cent. dividend, but its stock is down to 89, the English proprietors glutting the market with their shares. Other railways are obliged to abandon the most useful projects, on account of the sudden refusal on the part of financial companies in England to advance money on Irish security; Fire Insurance Companies are restricting their operations for fear of incendiarism; and country gentlemen are withdrawing the directions they had already given to the architects for the repair or reconstruction of their residences; all which circumstances, though injurious to every class of the community, tell with greatest severity, of course, upon those to whose blind folly they are to be attributed."

All this is bad; but it does not amount to a destruction, or even to a serious derangement of the social mechanism which had begun to work so vigorously and so well. It is a suspension, that is all. And if the crisis which has caused it demonstrates that there is still some little pulse left in the expiring energies of Irish turbulence, it also shows the perfect adequacy of the repressive power of the State. This conspiracy was as cunning and ferocious as any ever yet projected in Ireland. In the elaboration of its mystery and the energy of its internal terrorism it is unmatched. At this moment there are details in its structure, and peculiarities in its action which utterly baffle the scrutiny of the police and the opportunities of informers. Upon these points—perhaps the most curious connected with the conspiracy—the Government are still in the clouds of conjecture. Notwithstanding this admirable ingenuity and secrecy—notwithstanding too the severity of its internal discipline, and the seasoned military habits of a large proportion of its material, and the careful selection of the remainder, the Fenian Conspiracy, without a pike shouldered or a shot fired, has been entirely extinguished. We have already, in these pages, testified to the sagacity and the power exhibited by the Executive in dealing with the Fenian plot. If, then, there is matter for regret in the evidence thus suddenly presented, of the continued existence of Irish treason, there is also matter for congratulation in its numerical attenuation and social subsidence, and in the fact that where twenty years ago it carried with it the avowed sympathies of the masses, it is now shorn of its popularity, avoided and despised.

It is plain then that we may expect with confidence the speedy reassertion of that almost universal law of improvement which had manifested itself with a vigour so exhuberant and astonishing up to the point at which the Fenian conspiracy arrested its growth. Lord Dufferin has collected with great care the authentic evidences of the progressive improvement of Ireland, and we reprint his clear and rapid outline of the facts :—

> "If we turn to the agricultural statistics we shall find that the value of the cattle and live stock in the country is two millions more than it was last year, and 26 millions more than in 1841, and this at the conventional price of only £6 2*s*. per beast: a sum which next year may, perhaps, be quadrupled. While 125,000 acres, which last year were noted as waste, have now been added to our pastures, in addition to nearly two millions of acres reclaimed since 1841. The cultivation of flax is extending into counties where it has never been hitherto grown, and flax bids fair to become a crop both remunerative and suited to the soil and climate, and generally throughout the country a better system of agriculture is being introduced. If we look to the labourer, we shall find a corresponding cause for congratulation. At this moment, in my own county, the wages of an ordinary labourer averages from 1*s*. 4*d*. to 1*s*. 6*d*. a day—in harvest time he cannot be hired under 2*s*. or 1*s*. 6*d*., and with his food supplied. Railway labourers can get from 10*s*. to 12*s*. a week, and carpenters and masons, &c., from one to two pounds, the actual increase in the rate of agricultural wages being estimated by Judge Longfield at from 25 to 80 per cent. between 1844 and 1860.
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> "If we examine our manufacturing prospects we shall find, though on a smaller scale, that the result is equally promising. The linen spinners of Belfast have been making money at an enormous rate during the few last years, and the exports from that port in 1864 were nearly double those of 1863. Equally cheering accounts have reached us from Derry, Lisburn, Antrim, and the other seats of Irish manufacture.
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> "If we turn to the Poor Law Returns we shall find that no less than 34,224 fewer persons were in the receipt of relief during the past year than in 1863; if to the police returns, we shall be astonished by the enormous diminution in crime; if to the Bank Deposits, we shall perceive an increase from about £11,000,000 in 1863 to £14,000,000 in 1865; and, finally, if we estimate the increase in the capital of the country, exclusive of money invested in reclaiming land and in manufactures, we shall find that whereas in 1841 we owned only £60,000,000 of property, in 1863 the capital of the country as calculated in live stock, Government funds, Bank deposits, and investments in Railways, had risen to £112,000,000, or £52,000,000 more than we possessed in 1841, and this in spite of four successive bad harvests, entailing a loss of nearly £27,000,000, which put as great a strain upon the country as the cotton famine did on Lancashire."

The ideas that prevail respecting tenant-right among the very men who practise it, are loose and even conflicting. The correspondence between Lord Dufferin and Messrs. Anderson and Dickson demonstrates how disorderly are the theories which are seriously propounded upon the subject, by able men representing the interests of the tenant. Mr. Anderson, in this position, insists that "tenants-at-will on the Clandeboye estates have enjoyed, from time immemorial, the privilege of an unrestricted sale of their tenant-right." It turns out, however, that not a single instance can be cited in which an unrestricted sale of lands at will has taken place. Yet Mr. Anderson is a gentleman of character, position, and ability; and we mention this particular instance to show how vaguely, not to say wildly, even the most intelligent and respectable men will talk and write on the subject. These uncertain and exaggerated estimates of the rights vested by that usage in the tenant, are evidences of the confusion in which the theory itself is involved. The author of this masterly tract has, notwithstanding, succeeded in reducing the principle to the terms of a definition. We cite from his evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons :—

> "I think the custom of tenant-right is a very difficult one either to describe or to explain, and perhaps very few people would be disposed to agree as to its historical origin. The custom may be, I think, thus defined: Tenant-right is a custom under which the tenant farmers of the north of Ireland, or, at all events, in those districts where that custom prevails, expect when they have occasion to give up possession of their farms, that their landlords will allow them to obtain from the incoming tenant such a sum as shall remunerate them for their improvements upon those farms. But at the same time, though I think that that is a perfectly legitimate definition of the custom of tenant-right as now understood, there is undoubtedly another element which exists, and which influences the operation which I have described. But the element is a very impalpable one, because, although of late, since the question has been agitated and the real elements of tenant-right have been analysed by public discussion, even the farmers themselves will describe their claim as a claim on account of improvements, there can be no doubt that the sums which were paid by the incoming tenant to the outgoing tenant very often had no relation whatever to the real value of those improvements, and the thing sold, instead of being called the tenant-right of a farm, which is now the term generally applied to it, used more commonly to be called the goodwill of the farm, and under that designation I think a different thing would be understood than a payment made for the value of the improvements into the enjoyment of which the incoming tenant was about to enter. I think under the term 'goodwill' would be recognised something approaching to what I may call 'black mail,' paid by the incoming tenant to the outgoing tenant, in order to induce the outgoing tenant not to interfere with his quiet possession of the farm."*

The radical vice in the existing condition of Ireland is, as stated by Lord Dufferin, that "our social system has been allowed to develop itself for years on vicious principles and in a wrong direction." Circumstances have arisen to necessitate its re-construction. Hence we find ourselves in a transition state—"always a state of suffering"—and one which it is impossible to stimulate without temporarily intensifying that suffering. A worse mistake than this, however, would be by misdirected legislation to fix the transitory vices of a state of things, palpably in its nature, temporary and disappearing, and thus to arrest the curative processes of society, which promise health and vigour at no distant time.

Lord Dufferin treats his subject in a spirit at once practical and philosophic; and he has amassed and arranged his materials with extraordinary diligence and discrimination. Quite apart from the original and vigorous thought that tones these pages, they present a positive mine of illustrative facts concerning nearly every conceivable subject connected with the social condition of Ireland. The land agent, the public writer, the member of Parliament—the man who for any cause desires to master the data of the Irish problem, to sound its depths, and examine its difficulties with an amount of light and assistance to which he has been wholly unaccustomed in that research, will do wisely to take Lord Dufferin's "Contributions" at once in hand. We have met with no book, for many years, upon the same theme, which we can recommend so entirely without reserve or qualification.

There is nothing more striking in this collection than the genuine patriotism in which it is conceived. Nothing can be more frank and affectionate than Lord Dufferin's recognition of his filial relation to Ireland. We wish that in this respect he were not quite so singular an Irishman. Few men care to incumber themselves, more than need be, with a connexion which involves many irksome and thankless duties, and confers neither influence nor distinction in return. Every Irishman of mark must feel that the more effectually he detaches himself from his Irish associations, the better he will stand in English estimation. Few men will incur for a sentiment or a duty a risk of even a reflected contempt.

It was in this spirit that even in the humble walks of literature such men as Congreve denied their country—that Swift who could meet every taunt but that, with courage, retorted that he was not an Irishman because he was dropped in Ireland—and that even the Great Duke of Wellington pleaded that a man is not a horse because he is born in a stable. Swift was perhaps a solitary exception to the universality of the rule which associates this denying of one's country with a treason, far more momentous, against its parental claims, and even its indisputable equities. If in saying this it were our object to open a personal and not unjustifiable attack upon wealthy and powerful men at this moment obnoxious to censure on the score of this cruel species of cowardice, nothing would be easier. There are men of great wealth and position who, though resident in England, derive not only their descent from Irish blood, but the vastly preponderating share of their revenues from Irish estates—wealthy and influential noblemen, who, without those Irish estates would be insignificant and poor — who yet have never been known, by filial kindness, by honest co-operation, or even by one cordial word of public recognition, to own their enormous social obligations to Ireland. These men it is true are by no means capable of doing their country the services which Lord Dufferin's keen apprehension and habitual accuracy, to say nothing of those still higher qualifications with which he is eminently gifted, enable him to render. But wealth and rank—social eminence and the respect that attends it—are powerful to secure for Ireland precisely that sort of consideration which she most needs—a fair and respectful hearing, when speakers and writers so temperate and so accomplished as Lord Dufferin, undertake to state her case. His superiority in knowledge, thought, and expression, speaks for itself. It is his frank and affectionate patriotism that constitutes the contrast which should secure the special recognition of Irishmen.

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* An incoming tenant having paid an exorbitant sum to his predecessor, excused himself to Mr. Curling, on the plea "That he would sooner have his blessing than his curse." See Mr. Curling's evidence.

We trust that the day may not be far distant when Ireland shall enjoy the advantage of his direct official connexion with the administration of her affairs. Lord Dufferin has many personal qualities essential to complete success in such a relation to a society so peculiar. Perfectly accessible, perfectly courteous, he possesses a tact which is founded on a delicate and unerring perception of other men's feelings and peculiarities, and which has nothing in common with the vulgar suavity of deception. A scholar, a man of elegant tastes —accomplished, agreeable, and witty —he is precisely the man to command the social influence and popularity which enlist public confidence and so powerfully second authority. The amount of thought and labour which he has bestowed upon Irish questions—the reasonableness of his views, and the conscientious energy of his patriotism—are exemplified in the pages which we have here reviewed. In addition to these high qualifications Lord Dufferin has given ample proof of that administrative faculty with which they are not always allied. His connexion with Ireland by property and by birth—his direct descent from a splendid Irish name—and the generous affection he bears his country, complete the sum of his claims.

THE SESSION OF 1866.

To judge of a Session of Parliament, and pronounce it abortive or the reverse exclusively according to the number of distinct enactments framed and passed is to apply a false standard of criticism. There have been Sessions in which the Legislature was extremely busy in discharging what no doubt are theoretically its proper functions, and in which, nevertheless, only mischief was effected; and the time is not likely to arrive when there would be full occupation for six or seven months for the Members of both Houses in framing fresh or in amending old statutes. If there were such a demand for new Bills, the fact would argue an amount of imperfection in the institutions of the country, and an indefiniteness in the principles on which the social and political fabric rests, which would constitute a deep national reproach. The efforts of past times, and especially of the last thirty years, have not been thus unfruitful. With all its faults, our parliamentary representation during that period has secured for us not only the advantage of tolerably good administration from year to year, but a steady improvement in the system of laws by which that advantage will be enhanced and secured in future. A Session, then, is not necessarily wasted when the list of Acts of importance which have received the Royal Assent is short. A vast deal may have been determined, great changes accomplished, great ameliorations brought about, through the mere strife of parties, and even although during its progress that strife may have seemed a mere confused collision of personal ambitions and retorts, without any signal purity of aim or decision of purpose among the greater crowd of combatants.

We think this remark applicable particularly to the Session lately brought to a termination. It was emphatically not a law-making Session. It was one of special conflict. Almost as if in sympathy with the disturbed condition of the Continent, the great parties became agitated, angry, eager for battle, and finally engaged in a desperate combat which only concluded with the complete prostration of that one which, at the outset, had seemed far the stronger. The contest, however, was necessary, inevitable, and has proved in the highest degree useful. During the wavering fortunes of the fight, when the advantage inclined now to this side, and again to that, the agitation of the spectators, the obvious interest taken in the struggle, too deep to be demonstrative, showed the acute observer how serious were the issues believed to be involved. In fine, the question, one of manifest magnitude, was, whether henceforward the Democratic principle as opposed to the Constitutional—that which gathered its inspiration from an uncertain future and was generated in the spirit of experiment, or that which proceeded from the ascertained results of the past, and proposed such progress only as experience approved—should influence the management of British affairs. That question had become the more serious from the fact that a great parliamentary leader—we ought not to say a great statesman —had deliberately abandoned the moderation which alone is power in England, and had taken up his position at the head of that one-idea'd class whose views are irrational and perilous because always at a violent extreme. For the first time did it seem likely that their opinions, or rather their impervious prejudices, would prevail so far as to affect the position, and determine the future character, of one of the great parties in the State, and the struggle among politicians within the House of Commons was more to repel this attempt of a minority in a party to drag it down by force to a low level, against which all its traditions and convictions revolted, than to decide whether this or the other set of men should hold the actual reins of power. Among the masses outside—among all coming within the category of the intelligent classes—there was but one desire, and one fear, the fear that a disorganizing Radicalism might gain a fatal triumph, the desire that by some lucky combination of elements that triumph might be prevented, and the leader who had made its achievement possible punished for an unexampled treachery and an "error of judgment" almost amounting to a crime.

It will be admitted that the Democratic forces fought under great advantages. There was the persuasive and ingenious eloquence of their ductile chief, who laboured with all the zeal of a convert, and the intensity of effort of a man who felt he had irretrievably committed himself to the gravest propositions, which it would tax all his energies to justify. There was in his and their favour the circumstance that both parties in Parliament had pledged themselves to some amendment, if not extension, of the Franchise. It had been promised in Royal speeches ; it had been embodied in Bills whose principle had been affirmed at the instance of rival Ministries : there was no one in a position to repudiate Reform. This was a broad and firm basis to work upon. There was the circumstance that the journals most enjoying the confidence of the public not only professed the principles of the Reformers, but entertained what soon proved to be an exaggerated opinion of Mr. Gladstone's abilities and influence. And, in addition, there was, most important of all, the fact that the party nominally under his command, when the Session opened, boasted of a majority of 80 votes over the Conservatives, as led by Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli.

To many, under these circumstances, a struggle against an apparently approaching Democratic Ascendency seemed a forlorn hope. We never had that idea. In the pages of this magazine, during the period immediately following Lord Palmerston's death, as soon as Lord Russell had indicated his intended line by the character of his reconstructed Government, and more lately on the eve of the Session, we pointed to the probable appearance of a Middle Party in the House, which, though small, would finally defeat Mr. Gladstone. We argued the necessary development, and the certain unity of action of that party, from various circumstances, not the least the fact that, as followers of Lord Palmerston, they had acquired the secret which made his Government a success—the knowledge, namely, that the great body of the people were then, whatever they might in other times have been, seriously averse to vital constitutional changes. Events have established that this calculation was completely correct. The men of power during the year were the men who most accurately represented the position that sagacious Minister had occupied when cut off by death, and their power consisted less in the circumstance that by their votes they could turn the scale between two great parties, than in their perfect interpretation of public feeling. This was shown remarkably by the unexampled fact that the recognised Liberal press, almost without an exception, ranged itself on their side, repeated, illustrated, and enforced their arguments, and cheered them on in their struggle against the so-called Liberal Ministry, even at the risk of bringing in the Conservatives. No doubt for a long time it was the hope of those journals, as it was the wish of the constitutional Whigs, that the Radical element might be expelled from the Russell Cabinet, and a purely Whig reconstruction accomplished; but even when that had been found to be impracticable, they patriotically persevered, in order to save the country, at all hazards, from a threatened calamity. The leaders of this school, whom their vanquished opponents have utterly failed to injure by sedulous slander, deserve well of the political historian; and most conspicuous among the illustrious debaters and patriots of the Session whose line of action has gained the approval of the nation, stands the figure of the Member for Calne. His was the hand which dealt those crushing blows to the late Government and their scheme that left them sprawling in the dust. His was the logic which Mr. Gladstone's ingenuities could not pierce or evade. He was the only man, we believe, from an encounter with whom Mr. Bright shrank. Among the men of the Middle Party, as we long ago first named it, he was quite alone—like Saul towering above his brethren. The most powerful speakers on the Constitutional side, after Mr. Lowe, were not Whigs, but the Disraelis, Stanleys, Lyttons, Cairnses, and Cranbournes, of the Conservative ranks.

We are strongly convinced that there never was a case in which the influence of public opinion operated so directly upon the House of Commons; and the most assuring circumstance in a Retrospect of the Session is the evidence supplied so strikingly at every turn by every sign and occurrence, that the nation, whilst not inclined to reaction in the baser sense of that word, has repented its former tendency to run forward too fast, without consideration, and with a blind faith in the more Democratic leaders of the Liberal party to which they could claim no title from possessing the qualities either of prudence or rational fixity of view.

With the course of the campaign we need not now concern ourselves. It was a short, sharp, and decisive struggle. The constitutional Opposition, with a sort of Prussian dash and celerity of movement, scattered in successive great actions the solid masses of the over-confident enemy opposed to them. The result was the defeat, not so much of a Ministry, as of a dangerous political intrigue. The Whig party saved themselves as a party by disowning Mr. Gladstone, and resenting his attempt to subject them to the Radical minority—a minority so small, and so violent, and irrational as to deserve the name of a Faction. What was determined simply was, that this Faction shall not bear sway in England. The old Liberal party, which, with all its faults, can boast of having well served the country in critical moments, declared that it should not be—and the country backs their resolve. Mr. Gladstone was proved both a bad forecaster and a bad statesman: he did the wrong thing, and he did not perceive that he would fail in obtaining the support of any large body of the people in doing it. He had despised Lord Palmerston's caution—had ascribed to the timidity of age, or to the political levity which was the only explanation superficial critics could find for the successful Minister's satisfaction with things as they were, what was the result of the largest experience and unexampled sagacity; and when his former chief was removed, the clear stage afforded him tempted the comparatively green youth of the Member for South Lancashire to enterprises which would have not only driven from power, but from political life altogether, any man less distinguished, and, for his former services, we may add, esteemed.

The fall of Earl Russell's Ministry brought up the question—What Government would offer the most successful resistance to the inroads of Democracy? And here again the dictate of public opinion could not be mistaken. We may be permitted to remark that from an early moment we pointed to the necessity for a combination of liberal-minded Conservatives with Conservative Whigs—to the certainty that such a union would be imperatively suggested by circumstances—and to the fact that the nation would heartily accept it. Those views have been confirmed in every point; and if the combination has not become an actual and palpable Coalition, it is not only more than possible that it may yet still, under the same compulsion of circumstances, become such, but if that should not take place practically, a union of forces exists which ought to secure to us a Conservative Government for a long term. Lord Derby has played his part in a difficult time with so much magnanimity, and his political friends—in England, at least—have shown so much disinterestedness in waiving all personal pretensions which might have embarrassed him, that his Ministry has commenced its period of rule with the sympathy of the entire nation. We shall subsequently show that the opening efforts of its various leading members to repair the grave errors of their predecessors, within the small interval of time allowed them ere the curtain of the Session fell, augur well for their future success, since they have established that character for earnestness of purpose, directness of aim, and courage, wanting which no Cabinet will ever secure the favour of the English people.

The character of Lord Derby's Government is, that it is the first Ministry the country has had for many years (we mean no slur upon the later period of the rule of Palmerston) at once liberal and constitutional. Its foreign policy, as defined in the inaugural speech of Lord Derby in the House of Lords need not be discussed in detail since it has satisfied the country, and forbidden all apprehension of difficulty for England abroad in a crisis the most solemn, when a mistake—a rash Russell letter—might have proved irrevocable. For its domestic policy the composition of the Cabinet is a guarantee. No one, hardly even the factious journalist—the writer of the *Morning Star* or of the *Daily Telegraph*—dares to asperse it as reactionary. Lord Derby's bid for the support of the country contrasts in all respects with Mr. Gladstone's. He offers not sweeping and dangerous experimental changes, but good government on established principles, inspired by a tendency towards and a desire for such measures of improvement as shall be best, and not "made in haste to be repented of at leisure." Lord Derby also starts with an undertaking to administer, in its spirit, the Relief Act of '29. Until now that Act has never been properly carried out. Upon this latter point, however, from its vast importance, we are bound to enlarge.

In Ireland Lord Derby had an especially difficult task when he received Her Majesty's commands to form a Government, but that difficulty did not so much lie in the gravity of the social or political problems which the state of the country presented, as in the absence among a portion of the place-expectants of his party of that disinterestedness and patriotism which we have had to commend in the noble Earl's English followers. In his speech to the Lords the Premier had anticipated this difficulty of intense selfishness in a few men, and that small section of his Irish supporters carried their pretensions so far, even to the point of an attempt to dictate to the Minister, and by threats to compel him to acquiesce in their demands, that at length it became necessary for the public to interpose, and to the ultimate intervention of the Press does the First Minister of the Crown owe his relief from the hostility of friends whom he had proposed richly to reward, but who themselves aspired to instruct him, not only as to how he should deal with them personally, but as to the manner in which he should govern the country. Finally, Lord Derby, who had clung to them, for party's sake, as long as their pretensions permitted, deposed them from all influence in his counsels, and took the course, in dispensing his Irish patronage, and in shaping his Irish policy, which his own judgment, backed by that of the wisest Constitutionalists, decided to be best for the country, and most likely to secure to his Government a prolonged tenure. He abandoned the knot of extreme Irish Tories, the Family Party, as it has been styled, by whom his Ministry had in 1859 mainly been ruined, and consulted with the Conservative gentry of the country, men liberal in spirit, and anxious to see their Roman Catholic countrymen, such as are not excluded from consideration by violent and intolerant Ultramontane views, treated with proper respect, and admitted to a full share, no more and no less, of every public right and advantage. The advice of these Irish Liberals, justly so called, happily prevailed, and the Earl of Derby strengthened his Government, and did his party a real service, by conferring the Solicitor-Generalship upon Mr. Morris, a Roman Catholic barrister of moderate political views. After a struggle also, he succeeded in displacing "the deaf Mr. Napier," and putting Mr. Brewster, the acknowledged leading intellect at the Irish Bar, in his room. In that combat the Faction did not yield, but were thoroughly beaten, and not until they had done the Government a certain damage, by producing an impression that the Ministry were infirm of purpose, and drawn hither and thither by petty influences which they should have utterly disregarded. That conclusion, though under the circumstances not unnatural, would have been unjust in the highest degree to Lord Derby, who did not for one moment swerve from his declared design of establishing his Government on an "enlarged basis."

Finally that object was accomplished, and all the more effectually from the avoidance of anything like an arbitrary course in widening the boundaries of the party. Lord Derby gained the full consent of his followers in taking that course simply by allowing events, and the influence of a maturing public opinion, to convince them of its necessity. Toryism, then, as the narrow, exclusive policy of thirty or forty years ago, exists no longer. The Constitutionalism of our time, which the present Ministry represents, is an intelligent sentiment. It is at once flexible and high-principled. It means the governing of the country in a rational and progressive spirit, and an obstinate resistance, at the same time, to every attempt to substitute clamour for reason, and to change laws and customs by mob force. This is the sort of Government for which Englishmen were, we might say, yearning, from the time when the death of Lord Palmerston handed them over to the Philistines, and every candid observer must admit that from the moment when Lord Derby's Cabinet had been completed, and its competency established, there was a manifest settling down of the people into a condition of quiet confidence. The prevalence of that feeling has from the first been an augury of a long tenure of office for the Ministry ; and it has been deepened by the evidence which the last week of the Session furnished, that the new Minister's cast was a strong one. In all departments there has been an active preparation for serious work, without any appearance of "new-room" ostentation. General Peel and Sir J. Pakington especially have shown themselves earnest and capable men, the former in immediately adopting for the Army the proper style of weapon, and hurrying on the completion of them ; the latter in honestly telling the nation in how unsatisfactory a condition he had found the Navy department, and in boldly addressing himself to a reform much more urgently necessary than anyone can pretend to consider a change in the ordering of the parliamentary representation to be. In the offices in which the qualities of purer statesmanship are tested there has been the same capacity evinced. Lord Stanley has even already justified his reputation for caution, and the entire public feel confident that neither the dignity nor the independence of England will suffer in his hands. That confidence is so well founded and so implicit that it has paralyzed the agitation which the Opposition had imagined they could call forth all over the country by a mere motion of the hand. All the prospects are that the interval till the re-opening of the Houses will be a quiet one. It is the desire of the public, which may be said, in certain circumstances, to have the force of an edict, that the Ministry of Lord Derby should have a full and fair trial.

It is our pride to say that the principles perseveringly advocated in these pages for the government of Ireland have been boldly professed by the Premier. Englishmen appear to have at last become aware that those who raise the political noise in this country which seems to the casual observer to be the expression of a political condition and opinions, are a small and really uninfluential portion of the people. The position they have obtained in Parliament, and their command of some Irish journals, are altogether factitious. They have literally no backing among the people at large, whose single and constant utterance regarding them is a scornful repudiation of their selfishness, their "place-hunting," and hypocrisy. To conciliate those clamourers is not to secure the affections of the population. The shortest road to that end is the road Lord Derby has indicated, by showing the Roman Catholic gentry that he will administer the Act of '29 generously, in the true spirit of liberality, by refusing to rule the country through the priesthood, higher in station and extremer in views; by determining to appeal directly, earnestly, and courageously, to the whole people by an impartial administration of the laws; by a vigorous repression of conspiracies and discouragement of the agitators, who are really responsible for creating them; and by an anxious desire to stimulate practical enterprise, to lighten the burdens of taxation, to increase in Ireland the legitimate expenditure of public money, and to aid the people in aiding themselves by industry and effort. This may seem to the superficial not a very striking programme. It certainly excludes such reckless changes of laws as Mr. Mill and the Member for Tipperary would deem the cure for every evil. It takes from the restless portion of the community the opportunity of raising fatal strifes between classes, and deprives the political intriguer of his stock in trade, but it will be felt by the entire people as an emancipation from the thraldom of a system of government which drove the gentry out of a country in the administration of whose affairs they were no longer allowed to share—which paralysed the energies of the farmers by delusive promises of impossible advantages, and filled the gaols with seditionaries, the product of its own principles and operations. That system has come to an end, and neither this Faction nor that, neither a narrow Clique, selfish and reactionary, nor a clamorous mob of Demagogues, control the present Ministry. There is ground for hope, consequently, that their rule of Ireland will be as constitutional and as successful as their rule of England. Being marked by liberality, vigour, and straightforwardness, it appeals to the sympathies of every patriot, whatever his creed, or, in special points, his political convictions.

PARTIES AND THE COMING SESSION.

SHORT as has been the interval since Parliament broke up, changes have occurred in public opinion on almost all leading political questions of a more remarkable kind than probably many years have witnessed. It seems well worth while to reflect upon these for a little. Looking at things from that moderate Conservative point of view which best accords with the instincts and interests of the British people, and which most truly interprets the spirit of the nation's experience, it may without fear of contradiction be declared that those changes have been all in a wholesome direction. The tendency sets strongly at present towards greater appreciation of the value of a government on liberal constitutional principles, and a more real and general fear of mere experimental disturbance. This is a sentiment which has nothing to do with party names. It has not been produced by the specific action of any party. Nor is it due to the instructions of the press except in a small degree. Neither, again, does it result from the contemplation by our people of any collapse of democratic institutions in other countries, for although America supplies a picture of political disorganization that may well cause Englishmen to rejoice that the mob do not rule in these latitudes, the argument in support of constitutional views afforded by certain transactions of the past three months within our own bounds is so powerful that we seem not to need the lesson which the other hemisphere furnishes.

It may measure the depth and extent of this change in the public mind to state at once that whereas, when Parliament was prorogued, the knot of members then called Adullamites were regarded as persons who might expect anything but a hearty welcome from their constituents when the season for giving the annual account of their stewardship came round, now the Cave has become much too narrow to hold those that have flocked—or, rather who have been driven into it by the reckless methods and unbounded demands of the new agitation. That small group of Constitutionalists have proved the nucleus of an ever-increasing force. Popular vengeance has not descended upon the heads of Mr. Lowe and his brethren, but popular approval has encouraged fresh Whigs to speak out boldly and opportunely against the dogmas of the Birmingham school of Radicals. It is right to say *popular* approval, because the voice of the nation is not to be supposed to be expressed by a trades-union gathering at Leeds, or Manchester, or Glasgow, far less by a dinner demonstration which miserably failed in Dublin. The tone of the Liberal press is doubtless a true indication of the feeling of the general body of the non-Conservative public, and the position taken up by Mr. Brand, Mr. Bruce, and others, as moderate Reformers—Reformers more Conservative than Radical—Reformers desirous to apply strict tests of *fitness* with respect to the Franchise—but repeats that tone in action. A conviction as to the responsibility of right judging and fearless speaking on this momentous question has been growing, and under the influence of that prevailing and manifest conviction both journalist and parliamentary representative have been careful to shape their course. The consequence is, that if at this moment all the Members nominally Liberals who agree with the Adullamites of last Session, were collected together, they would be found to form, not a handful to be treated with contempt by the Boanerges of the British platform, but a considerable body of resolute defenders of those institutions which have given general prosperity and happiness to all classes in the nation, and have secured, on the whole, fair and equal government. The number of these, moreover, enlarges with every harangue of the Reform League orators; and in short, there is reason to believe that if at this hour the Members in the House not describing themselves as Conservative were polled upon some such question as Oxford debaters have lately started,—Whether Mr. Bright is an honour or a reproach to the country which gave him birth,—those found to condemn him and his Chartist franchise, and empirical Irish land project, would outnumber his supporters three to one. He would be left with a section of extreme Radicals so small, and in point of talent, with one or two exceptions, so contemptible, that his unsustained declamation would appear truly ridiculous.

The Liberal party in the House of Commons has no longer any cohesion. Even of the Irish Roman Catholic Members, elected largely by the influence of the priesthood, who, at the bidding of their entire bench of Bishops, lend Mr. Bright their countenance for far other than Reform reasons, there were found scarcely one-half to adopt the manhood suffrage, vote by ballot, abolition of the law of primogeniture, spoliation of the Established Church programme. With the utmost difficulty sixteen or seventeen names of Irish representatives were obtained, and it was notorious that these included several persons who in a vote would not go into the lobby with the ultra-democratic section. Both in England and Ireland the Liberal party is reduced to chaos, and the joint authors of that exploit, Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright, are powerless to reunite it. To do so, the former should first triumph over a morbid and enormous vanity, and the latter over a sourness of disposition which has more to do with his opinions than observation or logic; but the public would never believe that the one had become sober-minded, or the other sympathetic. They had only power to destroy the party which in an evil hour for itself acknowledged their guidance after Lord Palmerston's death, and that power they have employed with the result stated. It has often been said that Mr. Bright has no talent for constructive statesmanship, and Mr. Gladstone showed last Session that *he* had none for leadership. It is possible that in future both, by reason of their abilities, may be splendid in isolation, but they are stones that will not fit well, if perhaps at all, into any future lasting political edifice.

With regard to the particular question of Reform, matters seem to stand thus: Some argue in its favour who honestly believe that better government would be secured by an extended suffrage, and yet are far from going the length of either of the personages just named; others, again, and a very much larger number, as we believe, would concede a portion of the demands preferred by the democracy, on the ground of political expediency, although believing that the business of Government will be rendered more difficult and unsatisfactory by the change; and yet another section hold that Reform does not necessarily mean a degradation of the Franchise, and urge Conservative statesmen to deal comprehensively with the whole subject, under the impression that a fair widening of the basis would please the working men, but also by doing justice to sections of the higher classes now excluded, result in leaving things pretty much as they are. Mr. Disraeli is the chief expositor of this latter idea. He was struggling after the realization of it in his Fancy Franchises of seven years ago. He has clung to it despite the ridicule which those too-fine artifices brought upon him, and it is not a violent assumption that his influence in the present Cabinet will be employed in favour of a fresh attempt to settle the Reform difficulty according to that conception. There may, perhaps, be an indication of this in the circumstance that Mr. Disraeli has re-published his Reform speeches of the period referred to, in all of which the chief object was to establish the special propriety of a settlement emanating from Conservatives. When Mr. Disraeli pushed that view before, he was before his time. He was abused for it by his own followers as much as by his natural opponents. It was looked upon as a mischievous opening up of a subject it was better not to stir. Since then, however, vast changes have taken place, and although the Fancy Franchises would in all probability, from their inherent weakness, meet with the same fate now as at that time, the necessity of stopping the course of a wanton agitation by timely and rational legislation is better recognised. It is certain, moreover, that the peculiar suitableness of this being done by a Conservative Ministry has struck the majority of the public.

From them alone can a reasonable and safe Reform Bill emanate, if the Liberal party be split up and its chiefs have become advanced Radicals.

It may be likely under these circumstances that Lord Derby and his colleagues will prepare a Bill; but in the state of opinion already described there is no need for hurry. If another year is required to perfect a comprehensive scheme, one worthy of the occasion, one to quiet agitation for another quarter of a century, the public will not refuse to wait. Mr. Gladstone's fault was precipitancy. Lord Derby is under no compulsion to commit a similar blunder; and it does not seem to be at all necessary that when Parliament assembles in February, he should be ready to place a cut-and-dry scheme upon the table. There are a good many other things to be attended to, of more serious immediate moment than Parliamentary Reform, and the plea that these have absorbed the attention of the Cabinet would be a valid one to every reasonable man for a postponement of the question to a more convenient season.

The reorganization of the Army is a work of the first magnitude which the Government are bound immediately to take in hand. The late Ministry found to their astonishment that there was a good deal of unsoundness where people thought there was the highest fidelity and efficiency. The state of the world is not such as to render that condition of things less serious than a twelvemonth ago. We need a strong, well-maintained, and trustworthy land force, and how it is to be obtained in a period when the price of labour runs so high that the recruiting-sergeant's temptations are disdainfully rejected, becomes a grave question. The Government have before them the report of the Commission on Recruiting, which will undoubtedly be made the basis of a general change of system which legislation will be required to facilitate. The suggestions to increase the first period of enlistment to twelve years, and to make the second nine years, with a premium to the veteran soldier of 2*d.* a day increase of pay on re-enlistment, and an assured pension of 1*s.* a day at the close of his full term, are valuable, as is also that, partly carried out of late in Ireland, under the sharp pressure of necessity by Lord Strathnairn, for the dispersion of the troops heretofore gathered together in comparative idleness in the great camps. To these reforms the Government are bound to apply their minds not less vigorously than to the reconstruction of the Navy which has devolved—a work of Hercules indeed—upon Sir John Pakington. There is, besides, the codification of the Laws, the great Education question in England and Ireland, the grave query, What can be done legitimately and with permanent effect to benefit Ireland? the topic of Railways, every day more important; and lastly those Church difficulties which have risen into prominence with unexpected suddenness, and in such commanding magnitude. An agitator can see nothing requiring treatment save the single subject which looms largest in his vision, but a statesman is in a very different position, and looking abroad over the whole surface of the nation's life, and deeply into its multifarious interests, is obliged to hold even such a topic as that of Reform in due subordination to others which possess quite as much interest. Parliamentary reform is essentially of the speculative class of questions—any step taken in the direction of an extension of the suffrage must be experimental. We know what the present Legislature is, and what it has, with all its faults, accomplished. Notwithstanding the terrible things spoken of it, we may make bold to say that it has governed peaceably and successfully, promoting the greatest happiness of the greatest number. But what a parliament differently constituted would do, is a mere guess, and the most reflecting will probably consider, whether on abstract grounds they are in favour of bringing in a larger number of the working classes or not, that there are certain questions affecting great principles, and going nearly to the root of the constitutional settlement, which it were better to have determined before the doors are thrown open too widely. Not the least serious are those questions which so nearly concern the existence of the Church, and the vitality and purity of religion in the nation. In England religion and polities have since the Reformation been ever in harmony: the Church has been the Church of the people, and the people have felt pride in it as an institution in harmony with, and tending to cherish and perpetuate, their own spirit, under God, of complete independence. It taught men to be men, and sanctified their exercise of the rights of manhood by preaching immediate responsibility to Heaven. That idea in the Church's teaching, that principle in the nation's life, has lain at the bottom of the national character for fearless investigation, strength of will and of judgment, and daring and fertility of enterprise. But it is of this very gift of the Reformation we are in danger of being deprived; and if we be, our sun from that hour begins to set. There is a profound feeling throughout the land of apprehension that a false sentimentalism, encouraged by the foolish school of clerics who fancy their influence to be increased by a claim to supernatural powers, may produce a divorce between the People and the Church—the former representing the Reformation, and the latter that degeneration in the direction of Roman Catholicism, which Englishmen abhor, fully as much for the national weakness which they know must follow if it should prevail, as for the peril of the doctrines which it harbours. How to bring the Church and the People into harmony again, is a question to which the statesman must bend his mind, if he would secure England against a danger of convulsions far worse than any that a wandering agitator has it in his power to create. The task might seem to be one belonging especially to Bishops; but a main part of the difficulty, unhappily, and that part of it which most convinces of the necessity for immediate treatment, is the fact that the Bishops are not all faithful to the Reformation, and that those who are have little of the vigour which formerly characterised the English prelacy. It is little, perhaps, that the legislator can directly do to restore harmony where there is so much discord and wilfulness, but suggestions have been made for checking ritual extravagances, and maintaining the ancient spirituality of the national Church, and with it the vigour of the national sentiment and character, which he ought not to dismiss with the easy, we will say ignorant, remark that these are matters for theologians. That is exactly what they are not, relating as they do less to articles of belief than to the continuance amongst us in its integrity of that worship, and of that relation between clergy and laity, which bring the strongest support to the Statesman in ruling the population and swaying the destinies of the State. Subjects of this nature are of unmeasurably more importance than whether the Franchise shall stand at £7 or £6, or whether the voter shall pronounce openly for whom he gives his suffrage, or skulk to the polling-booth to push his paper through a slit in a box with the air of a man ashamed of his act.

With all questions of delicacy and difficulty relative to the present Church disorganization, even more than for the management of Parliamentary reform, the Conservative party are best qualified to deal; and it is, therefore, clearly for the interest of the nation that they should remain in power for a period sufficiently long to enable them to perform those useful tasks. There are palpable reasons in favour of Conservative over so-called Liberal attempts at constitutional modification. The latter party never touches that it does not mean to destroy. All its instincts are to pull down. It ever aims at a complete change, something entirely new, an altogether altered basis. The Conservative is influenced by no such spirit. He does not consider that existing institutions are perfect, but only that they are perfectible. He believes them sound and good, on the whole: he holds that experience has proved this, and he is anxious to make them sounder and better. Thus, even when he may take the very same actual step which the Liberal has designed, there is not the alarm about it which it would cause if his opponent were the doer of it. It is not the first move in the direction of an ultimate revolution, but a precautionary proceeding—one essentially preservative in its intention. And so it is that Conservatives can get the nation to acquiesce readily in progressive changes which would not receive sanction if proposed by those whose object is perpetual change. The strength of the argument derivable from these facts in favour of allowing the present competent Ministers a sufficient lease of power to enable them to carry out their purposes, is felt throughout the country, and Lord Derby did not go an inch too far when he stated at Guildhall his conviction that the nation was willing that he and his colleagues should have a full opportunity of doing the good to the community which they intended.

To that "fair trial," with the distinct promise of which the Ministry will begin the Session, they have well entitled themselves by their administration of the country's affairs during the Recess. Whatever mistakes may have been committed in the matter of the Hyde Park meeting—and for these the last Government were in part responsible—it is the universal verdict that the more recent "demonstration" of the trades in London was so prudently managed as to become a positive argument in favour of Conservative views on the suffrage. The workmen were encouraged to take the control of the display into their own hands, and in doing so they voluntarily made provision to keep out of their ranks the "roughs" and lowest-class politicians of their order, thereby illustrating, in the most powerful manner, the necessity for a selection among working-men in the bestowal of the privilege of the franchise, and affording the best possible practical argument against manhood-suffrage. The well-conducted processionists did exactly what Mr. Lowe has been vilely calumniated for having declared to be necessary—they recognised that there is a section of their number drunken, ill-conducted, base, and unworthy of being classed with the remainder. For such an assertion of the Conservative principle it was well worth while to have suffered the inconvenience of the useless parade of what Mr. Bright calls "force." Not less remarkably successful has been the Government's management of the Irish difficulty. The same skill which turned aside the malignity of the English reformers was exercised in the prompt action which has saved Ireland from an outbreak. When the Ministry came into power, they found the boasts of their predecessors, that Fenianism had been destroyed, anything but justified by the actual state of things. The fact was that much had been done to facilitate its revival by the premature release from prison of certain American-Irish, who had been apprehended only some few weeks before after much difficulty. The idea had got abroad among many of the people in Ireland, and was universally accepted in America, that the Government could not dare to hold these powerful persons; and, when the emissaries reached New York again, they instantly appeared on platforms to feed that belief by the most monstrous fabrications, all of which were implicitly accepted. This error, added to the grand blunder by which Stephens was left in a prison so feebly protected as to leave a possibility of an escape, and after his vaunting announcement of his intention to cheat his gaolers, made a fresh basis for the Fenian plot; and no sooner had the new Government entered into possession of the Castle council-chamber, than the conspiracy showed its head again, and so audaciously that there was not a moment to be lost.

There has been much dispute touching the extent and power of the rebellious influence; some over-rating it, and some falling into the opposite, and certainly more injurious mistake; but clearly what the Government had to do was to render it impossible for any rising to occur, led by strangers or otherwise, and they took the only steps which would effect that end. They brought troops into the country, and stationed them at once at all proper points. They evinced such a determination to deal in a prompt and thorough manner with any rebellious manifestation that sympathizers with sedition of all degrees and descriptions were brought to a sense of responsibility. They showed that public opinion in Ireland was still a strong backing for the authorities in putting into force the powers possessed under the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. They elicited such a general demonstration of loyalty, without encouraging mischievous displays of it, as afforded to foreign countries a proof that the population of the island—all who have anything to defend—are heart and soul on the side of order and of law. If, in doing all this, they created among the more fearful, who jump to absurd conclusions under the influence of a constitutional timidity, an impression that an insurrection was imminent, and that information of its certain occurrence lay in the hands of the authorities, it was simply impossible not to have frightened those persons if anything at all were done. Nor do we see that very much mischief arose from the almost unavoidable magnifying of several incidents during the Fenian seizures by the daily press. The more cool and discriminating public formed a rational estimate of the danger, and its origin and limits, from the beginning; and the alarmed section would have been tenfold more alarmed, had the police not shown their vigilance by making captures, and the Commander-in-chief once more established his character for foresight and vigour by preparing in a business-like manner for any emergency. The effect of the measures of the Government was to shake the nerves of the small minority of the weak, and to reassure the vast majority of men of calmness and common sense.

The result will, in all probability before these words are printed, be found in the disappearance of Fenianism. Already a large number of speculators in the rough work of war have returned to America, in despair of doing anything; and that conclusion has followed from the strengthening of the garrisons and the successful operations of the police. The Government have had by no means an easy task. Fenianism was more subtle on account of its experiences of last year, and it became harder to lay hold of its agents. For instance, on the persons of the eleven hundred or more of missionaries of the conspiracy landed at Queenstown and other ports within six weeks, there were no documents found, and in very few cases arms of any kind. It was the possession of copies of the Chicago resolutions, or of letters from James Stephens, which betrayed the leading "fillibusters" into the hands of the authorities last winter, and this winter they came over minus these evidences of guilt. They were watched on landing; they were tracked wherever they turned; and finally they vanished, with the conviction that it was hopeless to get from under the eye of the police. That they have so disappeared is the strongest testimony to the efficacy of the course taken, and the Ministry have already shown, although the work of extirpating Fenianism is not at all completed, that they are more competent to deal with the combination than their predecessors, who proved successful in the State prosecutions, but failed in other points. They well deserve the confidence of Parliament for vigorous dealing with the crisis, the more so as just now it is pre-eminently requisite to maintain in Ireland the bold front, lest the Americans should be induced to force upon us a war, calculating on aid from a disloyal population. There is no greater delusion, every Irishman knows, than the idea prevailing in America, which has found a place even in the Message of President Johnson, that there is in any part of Her Majesty's dominions a population on whose armed assistance an invader could reckon. There must be real wrongs to produce such hostility to a Government. Here there are no wrongs. All men are equal before the law. All have the same opportunities of rising in life. All are secure in the same guarantees of personal liberty. No man's worship is interfered with; his preference is his own, and all men respect his exercise of the right to judge. There are no privileged classes exempt from taxation, except it be the lower ranks of the people, who bear rather too little than too much of the burdens of the State. What changes of legislation may become necessary are carried as soon as there is anything approaching a common agreement respecting them, and ought not to be possible sooner. There is a machinery for amending what is defective or perchance unfair, whose motion cannot be arrested. Ample provision is made for freedom, progress, and the rights of all creeds and ranks. What more is wanting? There is no room for insurrection. It is a fire that will not burn for want of fuel. Thousands there are in Ireland to whom hatred of the Saxon is an article of faith, held as profoundly as any declaration in the creed of a Pontiff; but this hatred is a mere sentiment. It springs from no experience of oppression, no personal injury felt, no sufferings of others witnessed, no disqualification laboured under. In the nature of things, steadily as the gardeners have attended to its culture, it is a tree that could not flourish, for there is a want of proper soil to root it in. French journalists of the greatest distinction who have lately taken to studying the Irish problem perceive this, and nothing could be sounder than their observations on our social condition. American journalists, if they were more conscientious, would see with the same eyes; but it suits them to pretend that England misgoverns Ireland, in order that, by professing cheap sympathy with the Fenian Irish, they may have a title to the support of that section of their turbulent and capricious population.

The Ministry, then, will begin the Session with good ground for hope. Their opponents are determined, it is understood, to make a trial of strength at an early moment—a resolve which in itself shows a consciousness that the Government will gain strength by a parliamentary review of their acts. Upon what point the Cabinet will be attacked is of course a secret, probably is not yet determined upon. But an immediate provocation to battle need not cause alarm. The feeling of the public will rally round the Ministry and protect them against faction. They ask no indulgence: simply what so many of the Whig-Liberals have declared an intention of giving to them—a fair trial. Those to deny this will be a limited group of mere Radicals, and England loves not such persons. She would not wish to have one more dangerous than Fergus O'Connor for her Premier, with colleagues pledged to a ruthless career of political demolition. If the alternative to a Government presided over by the Earl of Derby, be one under the presidency of Mr. Gladstone, with Mr. Bright for his Nestor, we should say that the people of England would not be slow to determine that the Conservatives shall remain in office. That is exactly the alternative before the nation. No other Ministry than Lord Derby's is possible except a Radical Ministry, and England has never yet had such a Government, and is not desirous to hazard so perilous an experiment as its elevation to power would constitute. Ministers and their champions in the House are, however, called upon to prepare themselves for the conflict of debate with a very powerful Opposition—an Opposition, too, which will be as unscrupulous as powerful. The legal changes have seriously diminished the resources of the Government by removing some of their ablest speakers from the parliamentary sphere. This circumstance devolves higher responsibilities upon others, and affords them a splendid opportunity. It remains to be seen whether the "rising talent" will produce a Cairns, and whether the older statesmen will find as able coadjutors among the more ambitious of the party as the Liberals have generally found when their lease of power seemed likely to be long. The political crisis is one eminently fitted to draw forth the higher qualities of men in power, who heretofore may have found no occasion for the effort they are capable of making.

RECENT EXPOSITIONS OF THE IRISH QUESTION.

When a new Ministry take office, and the occurrence of the Recess shortly afterwards affords opportunity for speculation on their policy, it is usual for the Irish question to turn up, as fresh, and in as large proportions as ever, despite all former approaches supposed to have been made to a settlement. This is owing to various circumstances peculiar to the politics and the social condition of this part of the Kingdom. Many of the Irish people have contracted the bad habit of looking to Governments for too much, as if an Act of Parliament were capable of effecting a magical transformation of poverty into plenty, of sour discontent into harmony and mutual confidence, and old quarrels of race, creed, and class into honest friendship and generous oblivion. The Opposition are naturally anxious to glorify their own past efforts, and to render their promises attractive, by making the solution of the problem as embarrassing as possible, within certain limits, for those who have ousted them from place. There is, lastly, even among persons of sound views, an expectation that new men will endeavour to signalize themselves by attempting to do better what so many have failed to accomplish. For there *is* a "difficulty" both in legislating for, and in administering the affairs of Ireland, which may, indeed, be fictitious, as created by the perverseness merely of a distracted population, but is, nevertheless, necessary to be taken into the statesman's account, and contemplated in his measures and mode of rule. Thus it is that for months past the Irish question, and what Lord Derby "will do with it," have been the subject of earnest comment, alike in many friendly and unfriendly quarters. The revival of Fenianism augmented the interest of the discussion, since the impression has been sought to be produced that this plot is somehow a proof that "something must be done" if Ireland is to be kept peaceable, loyal, and even as prosperous as at present.

Before noticing the character of the suggestions lately offered for the improvement of Ireland, let us see whether this idea of the "moral of Fenianism" has any foundation whatsoever. The matter may be brought to a simple test: What, let it be asked, do the Fenians ask for in the way of beneficial legislation? The answer to the question brings out the one peculiarity of that organization. That Brotherhood have persistently scoffed at all the remedies for Ireland's ills devised by the whole race of political quacks, from the year 1829 to the present time. They ridiculed the Repeal specific just as much, in their *Irish People*, and in circulars and manifestoes, as "Freedom of Education," "Church Abolition," or "Fixity of Tenure." Their sole, sovereign remedy is absolute Revolution—to take from all who have, and give to all who have not: chaos, pillage, murder;

Letters to the *Times* on Irish Questions. By Lord Dufferin.

"A few Words on the Relation of Landlord and Tenant in Ireland, and in other parts of the United Kingdom." By the Earl of Rosse. London: John Murray. 1867.

"Irish Discontent." A Letter in the *Times*. By an Irish Landlord.

Speech of the Earl of Bandon at the Cork Agricultural Society. Jan. 6, 1867.

"A Plea for Irish Landlords." By Viscount Lifford.

the annihilation of every class bearing any sort of rule, possessing any species of influence; the destruction of the clergy of every creed, and landlords of every grade together; and the elevation to absolute power over property and life of a band of conspirators. Does anyone propose to satisfy this description of discontent? If there really existed in the country a general sympathy with those designs, society would, in fact, be reduced to a state of worse than savage anarchy, and men would have to think less of making laws than of defending themselves in open conflict. But as Fenianism is of foreign growth, and has made, after all, but small way, the Irish population cannot be fairly regarded otherwise than as the victims of it; and if that be so, it is absurd to argue that changes must be made under Fenian dictation. The only way to satisfy the robber is to empty your pockets, to give him watch, purse, and cloak; and there is but one plan to conciliate Fenians—to quit the island, and leave it to them to occupy—a course which will hardly be taken just yet, though many did fly from Ireland in panic some months ago, showing as little discretion as valour.

The Irish question must be treated entirely apart from Fenianism. The mystical term derived from the pagan Irish militia need not be further named in connexion with it. We have nothing to do with, and we know nothing of, those American adventurers. We ought to be able to manage our own affairs without their assistance. If it were wise or just to abolish the State Church, to change the law of Landlord and Tenant, or to adopt denominational principles in Education to the fullest, we could do all these things without aid from New York pirates. Public opinion is strong enough, without foreign pressure superadded, for any alteration, however fundamental, which it would be proper to effect—that is, of the propriety of which, as a matter of principle and of expediency, the public should become convinced. What, then, to be done is, to find out that which is for the common good—not what is calculated to further the interest of this ambitious party or sect, or sustain the domination of that class or corporation. There was never, probably, a time in which a greater effort was necessary, even in Ireland, to bring every scheme of change to the test of reason and experience.

It is just because this temper exists that there is so much hope of widespread good being done by such Pamphlets, Letters, and Speeches, as those of Lords Dufferin, Rosse, Bandon, and we may even add Lord Lifford. The statements of those noblemen have been widely read, and have already made many converts. It is encouraging to find persons in their position coming forward not only to defend their class, but to examine the problem itself with great care and candour, and to add materially to the stock of public knowledge regarding it. Heretofore it has too much been the custom to leave groundless and injurious statements of superficial or mere professional politicians unanswered, as not worth a reply; but those falsehoods getting a start have outrun the power of truth, coming too late into the field, to overtake them, and in some instances have been so implicitly accepted as to come to be treated as beyond a question. That persons of high station should come forward to throw the whole weight of their character, as well as a large experience and uncommon mental powers, into the refutation of such misrepresentations, is a sign that there is yet a chance of a vigorous, prompt, and effective public opinion being produced in Ireland, which will forbid all glaring misstatements of fact, and confine party warfare to the domain of inference from facts.

As contributions towards the important work of separating truth from error in the statement of Irish facts and figures, we consider Lord Dufferin's Letters the most valuable document published upon the affairs of the country for very many years. The author could not have more usefully applied his abilities at the present time than in an examination of allegations parroted in so many journals of England as well as Ireland, with regard to the position of the Irish farmers, and the treatment they receive from their landlords. Lord Dufferin has written, in a short compass, with wonderful compactness and lucidity, a masterly essay on the topics of Emigration and Evictions.

Mr. Bright's visit to Ireland has unquestionably been productive of good: directly, in showing his own total helplessness when confronted with the Irish problem; and indirectly, and much more importantly, in having stimulated Lord Dufferin to write this able series of letters to the *Times*. Already they have engaged the attention of nearly every journal in the country, and done more than any previous reference to the subject to enlighten the English public on Irish affairs. Shortly after his return to England, when smarting under the disappointment of his Irish trip, the greatest of his public career, Mr. Bright wrote a letter in which he said, "If Ireland were a thousand miles away from us, all would be changed, or the landlords would be exterminated by the vengeance of the people." If this denunciation is not strictly just, and was not wrung from the utterer by a rational as well as profound conviction of its truth, it is singularly wicked. It was the duty of Mr. Bright to prove it to be deserved; but the characteristic of this gentleman, who has lately manifested extreme sensitiveness when his own language has been misrepresented to an unimportant extent, is, that he deals in comprehensive calumnies, for which it is not the particular business of any person to call him to account. In this instance, however, his challenge has been taken up by one who formalizes his propositions for him with such candour as to forbid the possibility of any side-battle being raised, and discusses them with the most perfect good-temper, the fullest knowledge, and the closest application of a faultless logic. Mr. Bright had put into his lips in Dublin five statements which are to be found in scores of Irish pamphlets, leading articles, and speeches, repeated in the same phraseology from month to month and year to year, by persons often utterly without information. Those statements were—

1. That the emigration from Ireland has been a curse to that country.
2. That this emigration has been occasioned by the eviction of the rural population by their landlords.
3. That acts of eviction in Ireland are to be attributed rather to the cruelty and injustice of the landlords than to any failure on the part of those evicted to fulfil their legitimate obligations.
4. That the present discontent in Ireland has been chiefly occasioned by the iniquity of the laws affecting the tenure of land.
5. That a change in those laws in a specified direction would pacify discontent and create agricultural prosperity.

To all these propositions in turn Lord Dufferin has addressed himself, and it will serve a useful purpose shortly to indicate what he has established, and the processes of reasoning by which he reaches conclusions which negative one and all of the Five Points of the Irish creed of the Democratic leader.

There can, in the present stage of the world's history, be no more foolish idea of what love of country is and requires, than that which supposes any young Irishman to have a grievance who is compelled to quit his "Fatherland" to look for bread. It is easy to be sentimental upon the breaking up of families and the dissolution of bonds of affection, and the Irish peasantry have ever tears at command when such chords are touched, but common sense disdains all such weakness. In England and Scotland, and the latter country is the better parallel, a great part of the prosperity of the people is indubitably due to the adventurous spirit of their younger men, which prevents them from lingering on the old soil, to get enough to eat and hardly more, and induces a sustained and healthy emigration to all parts of the world. There is an old joke of a Scotchman being likely to be found sitting on the North Pole; and the enterprising spirit thus acknowledged, joined with industry and frugality, secures for the North Briton the snuggest spot wherever his tent is pitched. Everyone knows that those very wanderers are equalled by no other people in the strength and durability of their attachment to the land of their birth. Whether they return to it to enrich it by spending there in their old days fortunes made far off, or become one in all respects with the people among whom they settle, they remain, and their children to the third or fourth generation, Scottish in heart. No one hears them grieving that a hard fate had driven them to India, or China, or Japan, to become men of wealth and influence, when, at home, they could have scarcely raised their heads the least above their original condition by the same lifelong effort. In our own country, among the middle and higher classes of Irishmen there is no whine against the emigration which disperses their families over the colonies of England, although many who have sons in every continent will yet heedlessly join in the cant which makes the separation of father and son, mother and daughter, among the peasantry, by the "exodus," a fancied wrong, for which the "Government" is responsible. In days of steamships and telegraphs; of rich virgin lands on the margin of flourishing manufacturing communities; of scarcity of labour abroad, and frequent temptations to the young eager to see the world, it is simple nonsense to talk of the peculiar beauty or sacredness of any soil, far less of rights in any spot, other than those of actual property.

Despite this sentimentality, the Irish emigrants during the last fifteen years have been persons attracted to foreign lands by the prospect of the rewards which their stay in Ireland, by producing over-population, would have denied to them. "Has the Irish exodus, as it has been termed, been a calamity, or the reverse?" asks Lord Dufferin, and who will quarrel with his answer?

> "There is one single fact which will probably be accepted as a safe indication of the effects of emigration on the destinies of those who took part in it. To their immortal honour, within sixteen years after their departure they had sent back to Ireland upwards of £12,000,000 of money, chiefly for the purpose of enabling their friends to follow their example."

Had they remained in Ireland, what would have been their case?

> "If, instead of setting forth to reap the golden harvests of the West, these forlorn multitudes had remained pent up within their rainy valleys, would the existing population, those that have clung to the old country in spite of everything—would they be now the better or the worse?"

Some fifteen years ago the rate of agricultural wages varied from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.* a week, in the West of Ireland. Ever since it has gradually advanced, ranging in the South and West of Ireland from 10*s.* to 12*s.*, or even 14*s.* a week; while in the North the labourer "is almost absolutely master of the market, and can dictate what terms he pleases."

What Lord Dufferin well calls this "emancipatory process" first benefited the labouring class; still later, assisted by a change in the conditions of agriculture, it began to work out a reformation in the occupancy and cultivation of land, which will eventually lead to a permanent state of peace and comfort, if not arrested by mischievous legislative interference.

> "In proportion as the peasant cultivator has become aware of the existence of a more hopeful theatre for the exercise of his energies than that presented to him and his children by the miserable seven or eight acres he now miserably cultivates, that morbid hunger for a bit of land which has been the bane of Ireland is gradually subsiding; competition has relaxed something of its suicidal energy, and there is reason to hope that in the same way as the Irish labourer has already risen from the condition of a mere serf to be his employer's equal, in process of time the tenant-farmer will be able to treat with his landlord on more independent terms."

But some will inquire, What shall be done to provide labourers, if these changes proceed? There is a conclusive reply to the fears that suggest that query.

> "In the Lothians of Scotland, and in certain parts of England, it has been found that about eighteen men, with a small proportion of women, are sufficient to cultivate in the most efficient manner 500 acres of arable land. If we apply this proportion to the 15,832,892 acres of land under cattle and crops in Ireland, we shall see," Lord Dufferin argues, "that about 500,000 persons would be able to cultivate the entire area. But by the Census returns of 1861 the number of those engaged in agricultural pursuits in that country amounts to upwards of 800,000 persons—that is to say, to 300,000 more than are necessary to the most consummate cultivation of the soil. Consequently, there is still in Ireland a considerable section of the inhabitants, with their wives and children, dependent for their support upon the land, whose misapplied industry is as unproductive as if it were devoted to the grinding of a treadmill or the lifting of shot; but though contributing nothing to the producing power of the class with which they are incorporated, they have to be supported out of its profits, of which, consequently, they diminish by so much the share to the remainder."

It is a mistake to suppose that the

Irish landlord has a direct interest in fostering emigration. As a patriot he sees that it is for his country's advantage, and does not complain of it; but in very many cases it has been a pecuniary loss to the landlord class, especially since it became more the habit for proprietors to cultivate largely themselves.

> "What is the owner of an estate other than a trader in land? His tenants are his customers; the more strenuous their competition, the higher his rents; and the denser their number, the more keenly will they compete; emigration has a tendency to diminish rather than to increase his rental; and if it has not done so already, it is because it has not continued long enough. Very frequently the landlord is a large employer of labour. Within the last fifteen years I myself have paid away upwards of £50,000 in wages alone. During the last half of that period, in consequence of the rise in wages, I have got much less for my money than I did during the first half, and my consequent loss, comparing one period with another, would amount to several thousand pounds, and this has been a direct consequence of the emigration."

But the fallacies spoken and written on the cause and effects of emigration are only a small part of the studied misrepresentations by which agitation on what is called the Land question is maintained in Ireland. Nothing is more common than to hear that the Irish landlords are rapidly consolidating farms by wholesale evictions. Such statements have been made in the House of Commons, and having passed uncontradicted through the apathy of those representatives who ought to have been prompt to deny and disprove assertions of the kind, were in danger of becoming axioms in the controversy and the basis of legislation supposed to be remedial. The answer simply is that they have no foundation in fact. In no portion of his argument has Lord Dufferin rendered more signal service than in that which disposes so effectually of the doubly false representation, that the smaller class of holdings have decreased in number, and through the multiplication of evictions.

> "It so happens that the total number of holdings in Ireland containing 15 acres and upwards has increased enormously since 1841. In fact, there are now nearly twice as many small farmers—using the term in its most modest acceptation—as there were before the famine. This will, undoubtedly, be considered an extraordinary statement; but it is, nevertheless, the fact, that holdings of between 15 and 60 acres have increased by 61,000, or 75 per cent., within the last 20 years, and holdings above 30 acres by 109,000, or 107 per cent., during the same period—the emigration, so far as it has affected the occupying class at all, having been almost entirely confined to the poor people who tried to get a living out of bits of land ranging in size from half an acre to five or six acres.
>
> "So far from the landlords being responsible for the entire emigration, they held no relation, good or bad, with perhaps three-fourths of those who went, even though you counted every man, woman, and child that may have quitted—whether of their own free will or on compulsion—the agricultural tenancies that have been extinguished."

And the story of those evictions of which Englishmen hear so much, when any fresh case, however trivial, offers a pretext for renewing the old cry, is just this, and no more,—

> "During the last ten years the emigration has averaged nearly 100,000 a year; if this emigration has been so swollen by evictions, the annual average of such evictions ought to be proportionate to that emigration; but the average of evictions during the same period, as compared with the number of emigrants, has been at the rate of about 1 to every 100. That is to say, among every 100 persons who have left Ireland during the last ten years, about five persons, if we include the family of each individual dealt with, have done so under the compulsion of a landlord. In other words, at the rate of one, once in every eight years, on each estate; or, to put the case geographically, at the rate of one a year over every area of 15,000 acres of occupied land."

These "corrections" by Lord Dufferin have not been successfully challenged, as we happen to know from actual examination, by any Irish journal, although writers of extreme opinions have endeavoured to discredit them. Correspondents under a variety of signatures have essayed the task, but even with their aid the leading articles of anti-landlord journals have not disturbed a single fact, or displaced a single argument. The only attempt to dispute the passages respecting the evictions was one alleging an inconsistency between Lord Dufferin's statistics and Lord Belmore's Return. Of the latter a very unwarrantable use had been made for some time before, with the continuance of which Lord Dufferin's Letter interfered. The device, however, of treating every ejectment as an eviction, and of including those in cities and towns, where they are most numerous, along with the rural districts, was easily exposed, and it is to be hoped that the last has been seen of those articles on the Belmore Return, which were so misleading and unworthy.

The force of Lord Dufferin's Letters is greatly increased by their perfect candour. He gives his adversaries the utmost fair play. Their case is always stated correctly and fully, and their sincerity frankly assumed. The questions at issue are treated not as the sport of party dialecticians, but discussed with earnestness and simplicity. There is a manifest aiming at the truth in every line, which, united with an Irish sentiment, indicating that his class are not deficient in nationality of feeling, communicates to his papers what no rhetorical luxuriance would give them, a real attraction for honest minds. Those characteristics are most strikingly manifested in the closing letter of the series, in some respects the most novel and useful of the whole. Mr. Bright pretentiously selected for his text, when he spoke in Dublin, the question put to the Kilkenny Parliament, "Why is the King's Government none the richer for Ireland?" and of the reply given on the Rotunda platform it is enough to say that it made no impression on any portion of the Irish public. The occasion was only rendered remarkable by a proposal to secure the estates of large proprietors, either by compulsory purchase, or by a bribe of an excessive price—it was never very clear what Mr. Bright's plan was—which brought upon the originator the ridicule of the nation. Lord Dufferin answers the interrogatory in a practical, not a demagogic spirit, and points out unreservedly how and when England behaved cruelly towards Ireland, in crushing our industries, and throwing our people, again and again, back upon the land.

"I am only anxious to point out, in a very few sentences, what have been those influences which have stunted the development of our material prosperity as prematurely, and perhaps more permanently, than even the religious intolerance of former days has vitiated our social atmosphere. I allude to the commercial jealousies of Great Britain. It has been rather the custom of late to represent the landed interest of Great Britain as the sole inventors and patentees of Protection. The experience of Ireland does not confirm this theory. During the course of the last 250 years we have successively tasted the tender mercies of every interest in turn—whether landed, trading, or commercial—and have little reason to pronounce one less selfish than another. From Queen Elizabeth's reign until the Union the various commercial confraternities of Great Britain never for a moment relaxed their relentless grip on the trades of Ireland.

The owners of England's pastures had the honour of opening the campaign. As early as the commencement of the sixteenth century the beeves of Roscommon, Tipperary, and Queen's County undersold the produce of the English grass counties in their own market. By an Act of the 20th of Elizabeth, Irish cattle were declared "a nuisance," and their importation prohibited. Forbidden to send our beasts alive across the Channel, we killed them at home, and began to supply the sister country with cured provisions. A second Act of Parliament imposed prohibitory duties on salted meats. The hides of the animals still remained, but the same influence soon put a stop to the importation of leather. Our cattle trade abolished, we tried sheep farming. The sheep breeders of England immediately took alarm, and Irish wool was declared contraband by a Parliament of Charles II.

"Headed in this direction, we tried to work up the raw material at home, but this created the greatest outcry of all. Every maker of fustian, flannel, and broadcloth in the country rose up in arms, and by an Act of William III. the woollen industry of Ireland was extinguished, and 20,000 manufacturers left the island. The easiness of the Irish labour market and the cheapness of provisions still giving us an advantage, even though we had to import our materials, we next made a dash at the silk business; but the silk manufacturers proved as pitiless as the woolstaplers. The cotton manufacturer, the sugar refiner, the soap and candle maker (who especially dreaded the abundance of our kelp), and any other trade or interest that thought it worth its while to petition, was received by Parliament with the same cordiality, until the most searching scrutiny failed to detect a single vent through which it was possible for the hated industry of Ireland to respire.

"But, although excluded from the markets of Britain, a hundred harbours gave her access to the universal sea. Alas! a rival commerce on her own element was still less welcome to England, and as early

> as the reign of Charles II. the Levant, the ports of Europe, and the oceans beyond the Cape were forbidden to the flag of Ireland. The colonial trade alone was in any manner open—if that could be called an open trade which for a long time precluded all exports whatever, and excluded from direct importations to Ireland such important articles as sugar, cotton, and tobacco. What has been the consequence of such a system pursued with relentless pertinacity for 250 years? This: that, debarred from every other trade and industry, the entire nation flung itself back upon "the land" with as fatal an impulse as when a river whose current is suddenly impeded rolls back and drowns the valley it once fertilised."

The linen trade alone escaped, and at this day it is a source of wealth and of peace to a large portion of the population. Lord Dufferin, however, does not dream of recalling these jealousies as any defence for insane grudges which only paralyse the efforts that may be now put forth to recover the ground formerly lost. It is the height of absurdity to rail against the England of to-day because a century or two ago the England of selfish and ignorant manufacturers deliberately strangled Irish trade. It is equally absurd to speak of ancient confiscations as giving the present cultivators of the soil any title or right beyond that which they enjoy by contract or law. Only persons very simple or very malignant will revive these memories as the basis of any claim or argument. As Lord Dufferin finally says:—

> "If an alteration is to be made in the tenure of land in Ireland, that alteration must be founded on abstract principles of justice, and the requirements of present policy. It would be as great an outrage now to visit with penal legislation the purchaser of a property in the Incumbered Estates Court because fifty years ago the grandfather of the former proprietor created forty-shilling freeholders and took the best rent, as it would be to load Mr. Bright with the responsibility of Ireland's misfortunes because the particular manufacture in which he is interested owes more than any other its present prosperity to the cruel policy towards Ireland his predecessors inaugurated."

We have thought it best to make what is little more than a summary of Lord Dufferin's views, as they really require no further illustration or enforcement. We present them in a convenient form as corrections, wholly indisputable, of a number of statements that have too long been suffered to pass current. Like bad coin, these are now nailed to the counter. It will be impossible to put them again into circulation. Lord Dufferin has supplied the members of Parliament with a handy-book which will enable them instantly to check any re-assertion of the fictions upon which "exceptional legislation" for Ireland is claimed. It is perfectly clear that Ireland's best interests will be served by letting the change that is in progress work itself out. The result will be for the advantage equally of the Labourer, the Tenant-farmer, and the Landlord. In proving this Lord Dufferin has done a real benefit to Ireland, and by the signal moderation, the business-like arrangement, the directness of aim, and the comprehensive grasp of his Letters, has justified anew the high opinion entertained of his powers by his own countrymen and the nation at large. The most difficult problems in State management may safely be intrusted to one who so coolly, so thoroughly, and so honestly studies a subject to the bottom, and having sounded its depths, can convey his conclusions in language so terse, clear, and convincing. In these Letters, Lord Dufferin is not the representative of a class—except in a very slight degree: he is a manly inquirer and a patriot, having sympathy with all classes of his countrymen, and out of a pure mind, eager to advance their interests. The most hopeful sign, we repeat, in Irish politics, is to find such a man boldly taking a place in general public discussions, and adding high intellectual ability to weight of position and character, to maintain the cause of common sense against a declamation which is in some merely lazy, but in many malicious.

The pamphlet of Lord Rosse deals more generally with the condition of the agricultural community in Ireland, is less specific, and more historical. If the reasoning is less close and cogent, it covers a wider area, and suggests large considerations. Lord Dufferin's Letters are by far the more valuable manual for the practical statesman; Lord Rosse's Essay is a review of changes and their causes which have been spread over a century, and in great part a formal reply to the theories, we might write dreams, of Mr. J. S. Mill, upon which unnecessary pains seems, indeed, to have been bestowed. Lord Rosse would not extort a confession from the opponents of the landlords, and of rational principles, that they have falsified data and argued into gross error. Lord Dufferin has compelled this admission, and the confession will be an important weapon against the agitating class. Both compositions run for some way together, and it is worth remarking how nearly the constitutional Whig peer and the Conservative peer are brought to the same conclusions by following out an honest course of reasoning to its fair results.

Lord Rosse's review may be said to start from the middle of last century. He well recollects having heard old persons speak in glowing language of the time when bread, meat, and the best ale were the ordinary fare of the peasant. Why did that state of things cease ? As population became more dense, bread, meat, and ale gave place to the potato, and as they found that life could be maintained upon the potato, and the soil produced it abundantly, the growth of population went on ; farms, despite every restriction in the leases, then more common than now, were subdivided minutely, and the country became ultimately pauperized. The famine followed; the operation of free trade along with it cleared the soil of large numbers of persons who could no longer support life upon what it afforded. Whilst this emigration proceeded, the landlords, as Lord Dufferin has more fully shown, were themselves suffering severely, and could give the tenant no help. Now, emigration is not *forced* by any such calamity, far less by selfish or capricious evictions, and if it continues it is because a natural law is in operation, which no legislation can control, driving the Irish small farmer, without capital, to the country where land is cheap, and he can make a better fight for existence. His going is for his own advantage undoubtedly; but it is also for the advantage of his neighbour farmer, whose holding is commonly increased by having the abandoned farm added to it, and for that of the landlord, who gets a more solid class of tenantry as the change progresses. Such a change is entirely voluntary. Of the times when the evil system began which resulted in the over-peopling of the country, Lord Rosse writes :—

> "It was the practice then to do that which is now so much recommended,—to make long leases. English notions did not then prevail even in the courts of law, and there seems to have been a strong leaning against tenant restriction. In fact, covenants in leases by various recorded decisions had been rendered void practically. The tenant unrestricted by covenants pulled down the farm buildings, and divided the farm into small portions, which he sublet at a very much higher rent than he paid, and finally, when the farm returned to the owner again, after two or three generations, instead of one tenant there were perhaps fifty; the original tenant having in fact ejected himself. I find that the names even of the original tenants have disappeared in almost every instance, and the present occupiers have come no one knows from whence; so that in fact a complete revolution in the occupancy of land has taken place wherever there were long leases. To make this clearer by an example, let us take the case of the late Lord Palmerston's estate in the county of Sligo; the particulars are given in the evidence of Mr. Kincaid before the Devon Commission, Part I., page 30. The estate was let about sixty years before the Devon Commission was appointed, on leases for three lives or thirty-one years, in some cases sixty-one years in farms of about 230 acres each; these leases expired in 1838, and during the continuance of these leases subdivision had been carried so far that on some portions of the estate the farms had dwindled into farms of less than five acres, on others into farms of still smaller dimensions. The late Lord Palmerston was an excellent and most liberal landlord, and although he was prepared to bear all expense, he would not force emigration; but endeavoured to make the best arrangement he could for this excessive population. He squared the little holdings, and to increase employment he laid out £15,000 in constructing a harbour for fishing boats.
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> "About twenty years before the Commission met, Lord Palmerston gave fresh leases to many of the occupying tenants, to enable them to register ten-pound freeholds; and under these leases further subdivision took place, so that on one townland of 201 Irish acres there were 135 tenants. It does not appear that any farm was subdivided to make freeholders; but he simply gave freehold leases, the subdivision having previously taken place; and this, as far as I am aware of, was very much the case throughout Ireland. Mr. Kincaid says that there was no desire whatever for leases.

> When the potato crop failed, being anxious to know the condition of Lord Palmerston's estate, I made inquiry and found that it was costing double the rental to sustain the population upon it for three months."

Lord Palmerston's generous dealings with his tenantry were not unknown to Irishmen, and many other landlords acted in a similar manner; but who will undertake to affirm that the perpetuation of the state of things already described is desirable?

"Even now in Ireland," adds Lord Rosse, "I regret to say, there is a strong tendency to revert to the ruinous practice of subdividing the land where stringent measures are not taken to prevent it."

But Mr. J. S. Mill and others find a panacea in a peasant proprietary, and appeal to the experience of Belgium. The cases of that country and Ireland are in no respects parallel. In Belgium there is a fine climate for cereals; the country is rich in minerals; iron is raised in large quantities; there is a flourishing manufacture of artillery and small arms; coal is abundant. We cannot match Belgium in any of these points, and our different position necessitates a different agricultural basis. On the general effect in various Continental States of peasant proprietorship, and the wonderful influences attributed to the "magic of property," Lord Rosse has a good deal to say, suggested by actual observation. Throughout the districts of France, where peasant proprietors abound, the yield of the soil is scarcely one-half what is usual in England. In an old country the peasant proprietor is tempted to sell his land and become a tenant-farmer, as he may thus quadruple his income. Lord Rosse refers in particular to the Channel Islands, which are so often spoken of by the Theorists as model districts where their principle is carried out successfully. He went there to see its working with his own eyes, and his statement respecting the agriculture of Guernsey, and the sources of its prosperity, is so important that it must be given in the author's words:—

> "I found the agriculture reasonably good, where the soil was good; and the bad land very much in a state of nature. This rather surprised me, considering the high rent of land, four pounds an acre; but I soon found the people had other employment much more profitable than improving bad land. Many were engaged in fishing for the London market; others were quarrying stones for the London streets; the harbour of St. Sampson was full of shipping waiting for a freight of stone; others were engaged in shipbuilding, and there were several fine ships on the stocks; shipbuilders find it worth while to import timber from England, labour is so much cheaper than in the English ports. Others were collecting seaweed for manure, for they say 'point de vraic, point de hautgard'—'no seaweed, no corn-yard.' In fact, manure is the great want with the small farmers, and seaweed supplies that. The outskirts of the town of St. Peter's Port and the neighbourhood about it, was studded with villas, indicating incomes of perhaps a thousand a year: they were the residences partly of the mercantile classes, and partly of gentlemen with independent incomes, who had made Guernsey their place of residence. A large harbour was in progress of construction out of local funds. Full of Mr. Mill's book, and having a vivid recollection of the many passages, in which he expatiates on 'the Magic of Property turning sand into gold,' I was puzzling myself to find out the modus operandi of the process, which could produce such wealth as I saw around St. Peter's Port, quite like the neighbourhood of a rich English town; when, after asking I fear many foolish questions, the fact came out that there was not an estate in the island of above forty acres, there were few above twenty, and the remainder ranged from twenty to one. Of these little estates held by complicated tenures, some were in fee, others paying high rents, but it was quite clear that forty acres, however cultivated, would not support a St. Peter's Port villa. It was not from agriculture that the wealth came."

Mr. Mill, quoting Thornton, states broadly that, although the agricultural population is in one of the principal islands twice, and in the other three times as dense as in Great Britain, yet their agriculture maintains not only that population, but a non-agricultural population besides four or five times as dense as that of Great Britain. But these superficial statements yielded to even a slight examination of the actual state of the Islands. Lord Rosse was soon convinced that the produce could not sustain the population, and that the marvels said to have been wrought by the farmers were mere fancy. A subsequent study of the statistics of the Islands showed how correct was that judgment. Guernsey, with a population of 29,733, imports 34,330 quarters of wheat, and exports none; imports 1,297 oxen, exporting 41 only; imports 4,980 sheep, exporting 40.

> "With these imports, Guernsey cannot stand much in need of corn raised at home; and although the peasantry require very little animal food, the wealthy inhabitants of St. Peter's Port and neighbourhood consume the usual quantity. Therefore a supply of meat has to be provided, in addition to the oxen and sheep imported, and consequently meadow, clover, and turnips, are the principal crops. In Jersey it is very much the same, so soon are fables dissipated by a little statistics.
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> "The peasant proprietor is often employed as a lever, by those who seek to turn society upside down; we see how weak that lever is when the truth is known."

The general conclusions of Lord Rosse are, that excess of population has been, and in a degree is still, the "real Irish grievance; that emigration has done what neither the law nor the police could do"—put an end to agrarian crime by carrying off the conspirators against the law; that Irish landlords do not provide houses and farm-buildings, chiefly because a great proportion of the holdings are too small to require more than a thatched cottage; that as emigration proceeds and farms increase in size, it will be practicable to invest money in building (to lay on a per-centage for farm-buildings, that is, to increase the rent, would be at present generally unpopular, and inconvenient to the tenant); that doubtful improvements will not minister to progress: "the great improvement required is better cultivation of the good land, and better crops, and for that there must be more manure and more stock." With regard to what legislation may do expediently and justly, Lord Rosse's views are as clear as on other points. He says:—

> "It is admitted on all hands that where a tenant makes a *bonâ fide* improvement, with the *expressed* sanction of the landlord, he should be secured against all loss by an equitable agreement. It is also admitted that all necessary legal facilities should be afforded for making such agreements. In the case of a limited owner, however, a difficulty arises: the estate upon which the improvement is to be effected can only be made answerable during the life of the limited owner, and should he die before the charge has been wiped off by efflux of time, his successors might eject the tenant without paying the portion of the charge still remaining due. This is possible, though in the highest degree improbable, where there was a formal agreement to produce. If, however, it was thought expedient to guard against it completely, it would only be necessary to make the next in entail answerable by extending the principle of the Montgomery Act to such cases, with proper securities against fraud. That difficulty disposed of, if a form of agreement was provided by the Act, and everything was made clear, I feel confident that wherever there was a proper case agreements would be freely made."

But he is against what he "may shortly call thimblerig legislation."

It must be admitted that the treatise of which we have given this abstract account is a most important contribution to a full and proper understanding of the Irish question. There is not one expression in it, from beginning to end, savouring of party views; it is an honest statement of facts, and the sum of their teaching is this, that Ireland will best be served by letting things alone. The forces of nature are working for her benefit, and the legislator, except within the limits already defined, would interfere but to mar and destroy. Lord Rosse's Essay is not what Lord Lifford calls his, "A Plea for the Irish Landlords:" it is a plea for a patient waiting upon the issue of changes, which events are bringing about in Ireland for the country's solid and permanent benefit.

In the debates on the Irish question certain to occupy the attention of Parliament during the Session just about to open, frequent reference is sure to be made to these treatises, in particular to that of Lord Dufferin, the value of which at this conjuncture it would be hardly possible to exaggerate.

LORD DUFFERIN ON IRISH LAND TENURE.

It has long been the misfortune of Ireland that the portion of the population connected with property, and more deeply concerned than others in maintaining the institutions of the country, have permitted persons having no property, and careless as to the character or extent of any social change, to monopolize public attention in newspaper, speech, and pamphlet. How energetically these lacklands have worked the press in favour of their so-called principles; how vehemently they have urged on the platform altered systems for the management of estates, being ignorant of the very rudiments of the relations of landlord and tenant, those who have given the subject the most moderate attention are well aware. Nor can it be forgotten that such large success has attended this assiduous repetition of unwarranted statements as their too general acceptance, as true and sound, in England, constitutes—so that, at length, even statesmen of reputation succumbed to the noise of the multitude of the clamorous, and surrendering their naturally sound judgment, and playing false to their high responsibilities, began to speak in the prevailing strain of the cruelty of Irish proprietors, of their numerous evictions, of the necessity to put a restraint upon their tyranny, and of fixity of tenure, and other gentle specifics, as the only remedy for their abuse of the rights of property. The class assailed fell, on their part, into an error not unusual with individuals and communities who feel that they have a powerful answer to make to any calumny. Relying in the completeness of the defence they *can* make, they neglect the duty to themselves of making it, and leave an open field to the adversary to rage about in defiantly. In a time when what is styled public opinion is more the result of the combat of argument waged before the eyes of a crowd less prepared to discriminate than to applaud the seeming victor, this course is not wise, and sometimes it is dangerous. Much ground has been lost by such apathy, or misplaced confidence in essential strength, which, now that misrepresentation has obtained a headway over truth, it is very hard to recover. For illustration, take the recent instance of the publication of an article in the leading journal in which the permitted calumnies of years against Irish landlords were compressed into a single phrase, and their evil effects intensified, the writer apparently unconscious that he was not only suggesting an utterly false idea of their character, but displaying the utmost ignorance of actual facts. The "alien proprietary" may see in the sweeping condemnation intended to be conveyed in that misdescription, how blamable has been their consent of silence to the libels uttered of them by random accusers.

Some months ago, in these pages,

satisfaction was expressed that the landed proprietors of Ireland were descending into the public arena, and speaking for themselves. Since this began to be done, there has become visible a marked change in the minds of the less unthoughtful of the public.

The electioneering pamphlet is not now regarded as a complete treatise on the land question. Its character as a mere placard of political warfare is more nearly estimated. Nor are men taken as entitled to speak *ex cathedra* on matters of great difficulty, eminently requiring the qualification of experience who never in their lives let a farm, or had a farm to let, never took a farm, nor know the difference between one sort of tenure, or improvement, and another. Their pretension to expound the philosophy and practice of land-letting and cultivation is not increased by the circumstance that when forced at last, of very shame, to hazard the reduction of their theories to the shape of a measure for Parliament to consider, with the strongest intentions to devise a plan which would advantage the tenant, even at the expense of sacrificing not only the landlord's legal rights, but every principle of natural justice, they have but succeeded in proposing such schemes as would injure the landlord partially, and would ruin the tenant altogether. Mr. Fortescue's Bill of 1866 withdrew from the landlord his control over his property, aiming at the bestowal of a long tenure upon the tenant, under the pretext of its necessity to enable him to work out his improvements; but it did not, and could not, deprive the landlord of the right to take back his land before the tenant acquired a right to fixity upon it; and in endeavouring to coerce the proprietor, it simply forced him to protect himself by the process of eviction, and might, therefore, have shortly been described as an Act to produce the wholesale clearance of estates, and to swell the emigration returns—the very consequences would-be legislators professed to avert. In like manner, though in a more modified way, a Bill introduced this year would be ruinous to the tenantry, since no landlord would suffer the occupier to borrow money from the State for the incumbering of his property, when he could arrest the operation of the process of injustice by a prompt notice to quit. The friends of the tenant have been proved his worst enemies. So long as their friendship could continue to be a mere outcry against supposed oppression, it sounded well; but when they came to try their 'prentice-hand at law-making, they encountered all the difficulties of a subject which is only simple whilst natural and equitable principles are acknowledged. And thus it happens that, at this moment, despite the vehement logic, and many irrelevant interrogatories of Mr. Butt, and the speeches of Mr. Bright in and out of Ireland, and the articles innumerable penned in favour of compulsory leasing, retrospective compensation, and a variety of nostrums, the measure most likely to receive the assent of the Legislature, with the full approval of the reflecting public is that prepared by Lord Clanricarde, and now before a Select Committee of the House of Lords, the fundamental principle of which is the voluntariness of the contract between landlord and tenant. Let that principle be the stone on which the legislator builds, and the structure will stand: without it, no erection, however ingenious and fair-seeming, can last.

By far the ablest and most earnest of those who have taken away the reproach and the danger of the apathy already spoken of is Lord Dufferin, to whose earliest labours to bring the public mind into a healthy state on the land question reference was made in this magazine.

Subsequently, Lord Dufferin felt called upon to go into the question more deeply in a series of Letters to the *Times*, which arrested universal attention, on account alike of their extreme lucidness, the pains taken to collect and verify materials, the candid use made of these, the simplicity and power of the reasoning based upon them, the impartiality which marked every stage of the inquiry, and in addition to all the thoroughly national feeling, in the best sense, which inspired all that the author wrote. He was an Irishman, anxious to see his countrymen bettered in condition, and with a view to this, to discover, let what class might suffer by the investigation, where the evil lay. Perhaps no series of letters on a public question, printed in a newspaper, ever led to larger, speedier, or more earnest criticism. Lord Dufferin's facts and figures were sifted by the press of all shades of opinion; his arguments were turned over and over, and controverted in every form; but neither was a serious flaw discovered, nor could any imputation be cast upon his motives, or improper partiality for his own class attributed to him. Many of the criticisms were acute; a vast number were not; all deserved attention, and received it, and the volume now in our hands is a republication and extension of the Letters, as revised by the lights supplied, or confirmed by the failure of attempts to overthrow their conclusions. To their original text, Lord Dufferin has, moreover, added a vast amount of statistical and other matter of the highest value to the student of the subject, and the total result is the placing by him in the library of the statesman and the social philosopher a volume which furnishes the first clear and compendious history of the Irish land and people, and constitutes a magazine of arguments and facts for the contest with those who lay all the evils in the small farmer or peasant's lot at the landlord's door.

Lord Dufferin's design in giving his letters a form in which they will endure is thus described: "Nothing but an uncontrollable conviction of the injustice of the accusations with which the landed proprietors of Ireland are assailed, and of the gross incorrectness of the data on which those accusations are founded, would have induced me to embark in so uncongenial a controversy—my natural repugnance to which was enhanced by the generosity of sentiment exhibited towards our unfortunate country in those very speeches to portions of which I felt compelled to take exception. That persons of great intelligence should fall into error on the subjects in question did not surprise me. In any country it is difficult to disentangle the threads of popular sentiment, or to follow out the intricate operation of economical laws, but in Ireland a hundred influences, many of them compatible with the purest patriotism, and the most scrupulous integrity, had contrived to prejudice local opinion, and to mislead the national conscience. Yet it would be from such sources alone that a popular champion would naturally seek inspiration, and if his view of the situation should betray considerable misapprehension of the real facts of the case, it would be unfair to doubt the genuineness of his convictions, or to receive with any other feelings than those of respect and gratitude, any suggestions he might have to offer." . . . . "I may, indeed, be told that because I am a landlord, I must therefore be prejudiced in favour of the class: I can only reply that I am not conscious of any such partiality, and that I do not even understand the possibility of feeling greater sympathy with the legitimate aspirations of one section of the community than with those of any other. It has always seemed to me that a true statesman should guard the rights and promote the welfare of the diverse but inextricably associated interests of the nation with an undistinguishing solicitude. Even with respect to the future, if I am opposed to many of the changes in the land laws of Ireland which have been suggested, it is not merely because they are detrimental to the interests of the landed proprietors, but because they are gross infractions of the first principles of Liberty, Justice, and Government, and fraught with mischief to the community at large."

An inquiry pursued in this spirit claims a corresponding candour in the critic, and it may be said at once that those to whom the land question is no more than a party question are incapacitated from any fair consideration of Lord Dufferin's essay. There are a number of propositions which may be taken as proved, in order to get at the most striking parts of this volume without delay. These, for example, are that the emigration from Ireland has been caused in the very least part by evictions proceeding either from caprice or from a wish to consolidate farms. It has been the result of a great variety of causes, the nature of which has been traced in these pages more than once. It began before the famine, when the young attractions of America, and the preaching of discontent for political and personal purposes in Ireland, caused a number of the farming population to make the adventure of a change of soil. The favourable reports of the first and most successful settlers; the stimulating effect of the money which they sent home, not so much in the direct aid to emigration supplied by it in bringing out the friends of the earliest emigrants, as in the advertisement of America's resources which it made throughout the district where it was received; the fact that at that time there was vast room in the United States not only for the unskilled Irish farmer, but the unskilled Irish labourer; at a still later moment the temptations of a cheap passage across the Atlantic afforded by rival shipping companies—these, and other influences, combined with certain changed conditions in Irish agriculture, which the landlords had done nothing to bring about, produced a passion for emigration which has raged for twenty years. That the results to those left behind have been beneficial it is impossible to deny, and should, ultimately, that be accomplished which Lord Dufferin considers is being worked out, who can regard this emigration otherwise than as a providential relief to a country fast falling into ruin by reason of an increase of population much beyond the increasing means of subsistence? Lord Dufferin says:

> "During the last few years many a struggling tenant has been tempted by the rise of wages to hand his farm over to his more competent neighbour, and himself to pass from a life of precarious husbandry into the disciplined ranks of labour, where his industry is both better remunerated, and employed to a better purpose than ever it was before; and in proportion as the peasant becomes aware of the existence of a more hopeful theatre for his industry, whether at home or abroad, than that presented to him and his children by the miserable patch he miserably cultivates, that morbid hunger for a bit of land which has been the bane of Ireland will gradually subside; competition will relax something of its suicidal energy; and in the same way as the Irish labourer has already risen from the condition of a serf to an equality of comfort with his employer, will the tenant farmer, relieved from the lateral pressure of his superfluous associates, be able to treat with his landlord on more independent terms."

Doubtless to a very large extent this emigration would have been checked by the natural growth within the country of manufacturing enterprises, affording labour for the people profitable enough to detain them at home, had not one great retarding cause operated to prevent such an advance. "Agitation has succeeded in burking everywhere," says our author, "except in Ulster, our nascent manufacturing enterprise; what other alternative have you to offer if you shut up their path across the sea?"

> "Political excitement and agrarian outrage tend to discourage the introduction of English capital, limit the competitors in the market for those mortgaged estates that are sold, prevent the relief of the mortgager by a diminished rate of interest, and therefore cripple his means of assisting his tenantry, while they at the same time estrange the feelings of the tenant from the landlord, their interest being inseparable, and the progress of improvement being entirely dependent on their mutual co-operation."

The interests of landlords lie certainly as much in retaining an excessive population as in "depopulating the country"—the charge brought against them as a class. The landlord is a trader in land, and "when did tradesman ever complain of the multitude of his customers, or a manufacturer of the easiness of the labour-market?" The landlord is a large employer of labour, and the value of labour has been doubled upon him by emigration. But it is waste of time to delay further on the emigration part of the subject. It has been proved a score of times to demonstration that the landlords have not been the cause to any extent justifying any general imputation upon them. The whole history of the social change establishes the fact of their innocence, and all who care to look at the matter conscientiously have come to this conclusion. That it will continue to be alleged that the landlords are "driving the people out of the country" is certain. At the very moment when these words are being written, and after Lord Dufferin's masterly examination of the case has been for some time before the public, a letter is published by an eminent prelate in which the trite accusation is preferred with undiminished energy of denunciation. Nothing more can be done. Those who will have that to be so which they wish to be so, for whatever purpose, must be left to their own methods, but no statesman can require any additional testimony on a settled matter.

As a summary account, however, of the course and character of an emigration from Ireland, which must fill so large a place in the social history of our time, when it shall come to be carefully written in calmer days, the analysis by Mr. Hancock of the reduction in the religions and races in Ireland from 1834 to 1861, may be quoted: the table bears upon the question of the relations of landlord and tenant, for the allegation intended, though not often broadly expressed is, that the Protestant landlords have been using the machinery of eviction to get rid of Roman Catholic tenants, and how inconsistent with facts that theory of the emigration-drain is figures will best show.

"*Note as to the Reduction in the number of Persons of different Religions and Races in Ireland, from* 1834 *till* 1861.

"A religious census of Ireland was taken in 1834 by the Commissioners of Public Instruction, and, when compared with the religious census of 1861, it exhibits a very great reduction in the population of Ireland.

Population of all Ireland.

In 1834 . . .	7,954,100
In 1861 . . .	5,798,967

This shows a decrease of 2,155,133, or of 27 per cent.

"The greatest part of this total reduction took place amongst Roman Catholics, who may be taken to represent the Celtic element of the Irish population.

Roman Catholics in Ireland.

In 1834 . . .	6,436,060
In 1861 . . .	4,505,165
Decrease .	1,930,795

"The members of the Established Church—the element mainly of English origin—were:

In 1834 . . .	853,160
In 1861 . . .	693,357

Showing a decrease of 159,803, or about 19 per cent.

"The Presbyterians—the element chiefly of Lowland Scotch extraction—were:

In 1834 . . .	643,058
In 1861 . . .	523,291

Show a reduction of 119,797, or about 19 per cent.

"It has been supposed from these figures that there has been something unfair in the way in which the Celtic population has been dealt with.

"But if we take the largest Presbyterian agricultural population, that of the diocese of Derry (which includes the greater part of the county of Londonderry, the barony of Innishowen, and a few parishes in Donegal, three baronies and two parishes in Tyrone, and one parish in Antrim), we get the following result:—

Presbyterians in Diocese of Derry

In 1834 . . .	118,339
In 1861 . . .	79,287

Decrease . 39,052, or at the rate of about 33 per cent.

"Again, if we take the agricultural population belonging to the Established Church in the south of Ireland, in the diocese of Ferns (which includes the whole county of Wexford except three parishes, part of Wicklow, and one parish in Carlow), we get the following result:—

Members of the Established Church in the Diocese of Ferns.

In 1834 . . .	24,672
In 1861 . . .	14,383

Showing a decrease in 1861, 10,289, or 42 per cent.

"If we take the Roman Catholic population in the diocese of Tuam, the largest diocese in Connaught (which includes a large part of Galway, part of Mayo, and one parish in Roscommon), we get:—

Roman Catholics in the Diocese of Tuam.

In 1834 . . .	467,870
In 1861 . . .	302,367

Showing a decrease of 165,603, or 35 per cent.

"In the same way, if we take the Roman Catholics in the diocese of Ardfert and Aghadoe (which includes all Kerry except two parishes, and part of Cork), we get:—

Roman Catholics in Ardfert (Kerry).

In 1834 . . .	227,131
In 1861 . . .	215,028

Showing a decrease of 82,103 or at the rate of 28 per cent.

"It appears, therefore, that there has been about the same decrease of population from 1834 to 1861, in Derry, in Wexford, in Galway, and in Kerry; the same among the original Celts, the Scotch settlers, and the English settlers; the same in the diocese which includes the estates of the London Companies; the Protestant landlords of Wexford, the county of Kerry, with its large resident proprietors, many of them Roman Catholics, and in Galway.

"The Presbyterian and Protestant emigration commenced earlier, and took place to a large extent before the famine, because they were then better educated than the Roman

> Catholics. When a generation of Roman Catholics grew up, who had been educated in the National schools, commenced in 1830, they followed the example of the Presbyterians and the members of the Established Church. The famine accelerated this movement, but it would have taken place before the present time if the famine had never occurred."

No portion of Lord Dufferin's letters, when first published in the *Times*, excited more surprise than the statement that there are now nearly twice as many small farmers as there were before the Famine. Holdings of between fifteen and thirty acres, surely to be considered small farms, have risen in number 61,000, or 78 per cent.; and it is remarkable that the largest increase has been in Ulster, from which the emigration was lowest, and that in Munster, from which the emigration has been as two to one from the other provinces, there has been a decrease of such farms to the slight number of 806. If the farms of between fifteen and thirty acres were increased by evicting smaller holders, the grand emigration should have taken place in the northern province, which was not the case. If the non-disturbance of farms would have prevented emigration, how comes it that the emigration has been highest in Munster, where there has been hardly any change? There is, indeed, a register of evictions, the least consideration of which will show the small effect they can have had on emigration. In 1865 there were in counties, including the urban evictions, 1,334 evictions executed, or one eviction in 437 holdings. These evictions affected altogether but 7,000 persons, and the emigration was over 100,000. Moreover, it has been ascertained that of the total emigration from the United Kingdom during the last 13 years, only 4 per cent. were persons belonging to the farming population proper.

Lord Dufferin ably retaliates for the attack on the landlords by showing that the discouragement of Irish manufactures by English laws was the origin of that which is the real difficulty of the country, and cause of emigration. What is wanted and does not exist is labour, other than agricultural, to which the sons of small farmers can turn their hands. In the absence of it they must emigrate. The alternative is the miserable state of things described by Dr. Duke, one of the witnesses before the Devon Commission, who said—"It was a common practise when a man had five acres to subdivide them between his three sons." To prevent this enormous evil another witness would have made a law to coerce the farmers to send their families to earn their bread at different trades. That would, he believed, create manufacture. The skilled workmen would also "go abroad to other countries of their own accord, and perhaps return to the hive enriched." But there were no trades. The English policy towards Irish manufactures in the last century killed them. The youth of the country emigrated, not as trained workmen, but of absolute necessity to find a morsel to eat. "From Queen Elizabeth's reign until within a few years of the Union, the various commercial confraternities of Great Britain never for a moment relaxed their relentless grip on the trades of Ireland." Many attempts were made to deprive Ireland of the boon of her linen trade. In 1785 a petition signed by 117,000 persons, and presented by Manchester, prayed for the prohibition of Irish linens; but this one trade escaped, and "how has it repaid the clemency of the British Parliament? By dowering the Crown of England with as fair a cluster of flourishing towns and loyal centres of industry as are to be found in any portion of the empire. Would you see what Ireland might have been—go to Derry, to Belfast, to Lisburn (says Lord Dufferin), and by the exceptional prosperity which has been developed, not only within a hundred towns and villages, but for miles and miles around them, you may measure the extent of the injury we have sustained." Blame this injustice, and not the landlords, is, however, a sort of defence that must not be pushed too far. It is a sufficiently extended period since all restrictions upon Irish trade disappeared to have afforded opportunity for the establishment of many manufactures in Ireland; and, as a matter of fact, in other countries and localities less favourably circumstanced, vast progress has been made during the last fifty years, despite all competition of England. The non-existence of manufactures other than the linen trade of Ulster at the present day is, in fact, as much, perhaps more due to those recent causes which Lord Dufferin elsewhere forcibly indicates—the continuance of political agitation, the smouldering of insurrection, the violent consequent vices of the people, which deterred capitalists from making investments in promising places. To throw all the blame upon the mis-legislation of times long past is to provide an excuse for the apathy, the errors, and the paralysing and causeless ill-temper of later days.

It is the same going even centuries back for a grievance which has established in the minds of the peasantry the impression that the land is theirs, that they were forcibly dispossessed of it, and that it will eventually be restored to them. The utter folly of that notion is obvious to every person of reflection; nevertheless, it prevails extensively, almost universally, in the South and West, and hence the sympathy with the Fenian stranger, regarded as an intending restorer of the confiscated acres to the people. The American filibuster and his Irish shopmen and artisan allies, if they could succeed, would of course appropriate the spoil for themselves; but for the small amount of consideration necessary to establish this conclusion the peasantry seem unfitted—a circumstance in itself showing how greatly their minds have been debauched. A passage from Lord Dufferin's pages on this point defines the relations of landlord and tenant very simply, and points clearly to the effects of a redistribution of land, if that occurred through any revolution:—

> "First, let us define the respective rights of landlord and tenant. A landlord is an owner of land; that is to say, he has either bought it himself, or inherited it from those who have bought it. In either case, the land he possesses represents a specific amount of capital, accumulated either by his own industry or by that of his forefathers, for which he is content to receive interest at a rate seldom exceeding 2½ or 3 per cent. I may here observe that considerable prominence has been given of late to the fact that in the time of Elizabeth, Cromwell, and William, extensive confiscations of property took place in Ireland, and it has been more than hinted that such a circumstance might justify the repetition of an analogous process. But, however strongly this argument may appeal to the conscience of the small minority who are able to trace their present proprietorship to an historical source, it will hardly commend itself to those whose possessions represent the mercantile industry of some distant ancestor, improved by centuries of hereditary thrift, or the proceeds of their own exertions invested in land on the faith of a Parliamentary title. Whether vague suggestions,—which (as far as they mean anything) would imply the uprooting of the whole of the population of Ulster, and the transference of nearly all the landed property of Ireland, from those whose legal title to it is indisputable to a thousand competitors whose claims would rest on distinctions of race and religion,—are calculated to attract capital to the country or promote a feeling of security, it is needless to inquire. Such barren speculations cannot alter the fact that at present the owner of landed property in Ireland holds it in exactly the same sense, and under the same conditions, as the owner of property in England.
>
> "On a map of Ireland, executed in Queen Elizabeth's reign, which has been discovered by Mr. Froude, at Vienna, the possessions of the contemporary chieftains are delineated. Occupying a prominent place in the centre of the island, is a rich district described as the country of the O'Sheridans. As a native representative of what appears to have been, at all events at one time, an opulent house, I might be tempted to urge the expulsion of its present alien owners from the rich heritage of my ancestors."

The most valuable part of the work which Lord Dufferin, with too great modesty, calls his "pamphlet," is the fifth chapter, which, taken together with the appendix illustrating it, furnishes a complete answer to those who declare the curse of Ireland to be the indisposition of the landlords to grant leases, and would cure all the country's evils by compelling the granting of a 61 years' tenure. In Belgium, so often referred to as a model, leases are commonly for three, five, and nine years, terms which cannot be said to give the security which will account, on Irish popular theories, for the success of Belgian farming. In Scotland the leases are for thirteen years and nineteen, and farms of 1,000 and 1,200 acres are taken for the latter term by persons who expend large capital upon them, and have no reason to believe that their lease will be renewed. In

England the tenure in many districts is 21 years. Why, then, should 61 years be spoken of as necessary in Ireland? What would be the effect upon the tenant of such a tenure, and how would the legislation enforcing it operate upon the landlord? In many cases, Lord Dufferin tells us, the only reason for which a lease is desired is to obtain a document on which money can be raised, or an extravagant charge for younger children effected. The lease in such instances, by giving immunity from responsibility, instead of stimulating the industry of the occupier, "too often acts as a premium on idleness." Although, as a principle, it is better land should be let on lease, it must not be supposed that it is always for the tenant's benefit to get a lease, or that tenants always wish one. Then as to the landlord, the difficulties of preventing sub-division are even at this moment serious. If the landlord should be forced to give a long lease, with the alternative of taking the land into his own hands, of course he will refuse the boon to all tenants who are in debt, who are not industrious, or who in any way whatsoever stand in such a position as to render the granting of a lease to them undesirable, and here again is the observation already made illustrated, that the friends of the tenant, who interpose to prevent a free and fair bargain between him and his landlord, by means of compulsory regulative legislation, are really his enemies. In the contest which they establish, in place of existing relations, between the law and the landlord, the tenant alone can suffer.

> "The consequences of forcing leases by Act of Parliament are sufficiently obvious. Hitherto, one of the chief accusations brought against the Irish proprietor has been his indifference to the character and the solvency of his tenant, and in order to correct this indifference, it is proposed to abolish the priority of his claim on the rent, and to reduce him to the ranks of an ordinary creditor. If, therefore, under these circumstances he is precluded from letting his land, except under a thirty-one years' lease, an inexorable necessity will be imposed upon him to exclude from such a permanent arrangement those of his existing tenants who are in debt, or who are likely to fall into embarrassment during the obligatory term. Now perhaps the tenantry of no estate in Ireland is more prosperous than my own; yet my agent informs me, that unhappily more than a third of the farmers upon my property are under heavy pecuniary obligations through the country, in addition to those incurred towards myself. At present their creditors are aware that to drive them from their farms by the application of any premature pressure would only reduce to a minimum their own chances of receiving payment. My own inclination is to give them every opportunity to extricate themselves from their difficulties; and though the position of affairs is not satisfactory, nor can the ultimate destiny of many of these persons be doubtful, a reasonable amount of forbearance on my part, may save some, and greatly mitigate the hardship of their situation to the rest.
>
> "If, however, I found myself suddenly called upon by Parliament to lease away my estate for a whole generation, matters would be brought to a crisis, and in self-defence I should be forced (very much against my will) to exclude from the intended benefits of the arrangement every single individual circumstanced as I have described. No landlord could be expected to grant a lease to a bankrupt, or to enter into a contract with a person incapable of fulfilling its obligations.
>
> "But in addition to those of my tenants who are actually in debt, there are a certain number who are so destitute of capital, —so unskilful,—occupiers of such small and inconvenient patches,—so near the verge of ruin,—as to be very unfit recipients of a lease. However unwilling I might be to continue them in their present holdings until an opportunity shall occur of establishing them as labourers, or of enabling their sons to emigrate, or of converting the old people into pensioners, a very different arrangement would be necessary if Parliament held a pistol to my head, and left me no choice but to give them 31 years' leases, or resume possession of my land. Now if these undesirable contingencies might arise on a prosperous estate in Ulster, it is scarcely necessary to indicate what would be the consequences of such anomalous interference by Parliament in the south and west of Ireland."

But we must draw to a close our passing remarks on a volume which is much more than a refutation of the charges preferred against Irish landlords, by one who will not be accused of want of sympathy with the tenantry and people, and who, above all other qualities, manifests in his work that candour which is lamentably absent in the discussion of Irish questions. Lord Dufferin did not think his task accomplished when he stated that, for the emigration which is superficially complained of, the landlords are not blamable: he went further, and his retrospect of the economical history of Ireland; his careful review of the proposals of Mr. Butt and others for the alteration of the law of tenure; his investigations as to the rate of wages in different parts of Ireland, in contrast with former times; and the large quantity of valuable matter added, make the book the standard one on the question. If writers and speakers on Irish landlordism were only animated in all cases by an honest desire to arrive at truth, and did not regard the subject as merely the property of party politics, a hope might be entertained that such a work would greatly tend to allay that agitation which interferes with the growth of enterprise and the flow of capital into the country. It has been objected that Lord Dufferin's volume is simply a plea for things as they are, but it is not proper to describe it thus, although things as they are seem vastly better than things as Mr. Butt and others would have them to be. Lord Dufferin declares his object to have been to "establish truth and to advocate justice." The proper settlement of every question, and the true interests of every class, must be promoted by establishing truth. The doctrine that Ireland is to be saved by the sacrifice of the rights of property, as a violation of truth and justice, would aggravate all existing difficulties. This statement, in principle obviously sound, the author has justified by a full examination of the effects which would flow from all the changes most commonly proposed; but he by no means shuts the door against improvement in legislation, or disputes the need of it. All that is contended for is that it shall be based on truth and equity, and this the interests of the tenant require even more than do those of the landlord. It cannot but be regarded as a hopeful circumstance to see a nobleman of Lord Dufferin's great ability and experience devoting so much time and attention to the thorough examination, in detail as well as in principle, of a subject so intricate and perplexing. The uselessness of the House of Lords has lately been the theme of a journalist of large influence, but as long as its members contribute such works as that before us to the assisting of the business of practical legislation, and follow them up by wise counsels in their Chamber, the charge must fail.

"OLD SIR DOUGLAS."*

THERE can be little doubt that in "Old Sir Douglas" the Hon. Mrs. Norton has attained her highest excellence as a writer of fiction—not only has that tale an advantage over "Lost and Saved," in not being written, as the phrase is, "for a purpose," but over all her other prose works in vigour of interest, in profusion of thought and poetry; and, more strikingly still, in variety and singularity of character. If the book contained no other portrait than that of Alice Ross, that one marvellous delineation would suffice to stamp it as a work of the highest order of genius. But this book is characterized by all the brilliant singularities of its celebrated authoress. Mrs. Norton's narrative is impassioned in the sense in which a speech is impassioned. It is a statement of an extraordinary case, by an advocate of startling force, fancy, sarcasm, and pathos. It differs from other stories, not only in the measure of its power, but in the attitude of its narrator. Mrs. Norton handles the story she tells and the persons who figure in it, like an advocate in the forum. She denounces, she applauds—she throws her own passionate sympathies undisguisedly into her narrative, and the reader finds himself carried away by a double force—by the extraordinary interest of the tale, and by the enthusiasm of its reciter. It is this predominance of the rhetorical temperament which distinguishes Mrs. Norton essentially from all contemporary story-tellers, and contributes, one powerful element to the general fascination of her fictions.

The generous partialities and antipathies to which her impetuous eloquence is subservient, aid in stimulating the feelings of the reader, who lays down the book with a consciousness of having been wrought upon by something more than the situations, the dialogue, and the characters which enter strictly into a story—of having been pleaded with, harangued, and inflamed by an orator difficult to resist during the entire movement of the drama.

In her method of treating a story, there are other peculiarities distinguishing her manner in a very marked way from that of most other writers of romance. There is hardly to be found in the entire work a single page of *mere* narrative. There runs through it a fine essaic vein of illustration drawn from acute observation and often from very profound thought.

The thinking faculty of the reader is thus kept in continual play, while his fancy is charmed by the poetic faculty and brilliant wit which beautify and illuminate without ever disturbing this current of severer thought. The proportion of this delightful and brilliant ingredient is so large as to impart a very singular charm to the work. We have mentioned that sparkling quality which is the natural heritage of Mrs. Norton. There are touches, too, of delicate humour, and playful, feminine irony, to be found in these pages, which to those familiar with the writings of Mrs. Frances Sheridan will recall one of the happiest gifts of that delightful mind.

To support what we have said respecting the "essaic ingredient" of which we have spoken, and which everywhere pervades this powerful book, we reprint, with hardly an attempt at selection, a few examples of the graver discussion which flows concurrently with the story.

> "On their way to Glenrossie! Ah, what other rapture, what other fulness of joy, shall compare to the day, when the woman who loves deeply and truly is borne to the home of the man she so loves?
>
> "For ever! The human 'for-ever'—the for-ever 'till death do us part,' how it stretches out its illimitable future of joy, as we sit, hand linked in hand, sure of each other, of existence, of love, of all that makes a paradise of earth; and the hedges and boundaries that divide lands flee past before our dreaming eyes; and the morning sun glows into noon; and the noon burns and fades; and the day sinks again, with a

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* "Old Sir Douglas." By the Hon. Mrs. Norton. London: Hurst and Blackett.

crimson haze, into sunset—and perhaps the sweet and quiet light—the pale light of the moon—swims up into that sea of blue men call the sky; while still we are journeying on to the one spot on earth where we have cast our anchor of hope; to the trees and lawns, and rocks and hills, and gardens of flowers, and paths of delight, which *were* till now all HIS: but since the morning are OURS!—the place we have loved without ever seeing it, perhaps,—the place that saw his boyhood; where his people drew breath; where his dear ones have lived and died; where *we* hope to live and die—Home! The blessed word HOME!"

. . . .

"If there were not daily examples to familiarize us with the marvel, we might wonder at the strange way in which Nature asserts herself; or rather, at the effects of Nature and accident combined, in the characters of individuals.

"We see children, all brought up in one home, under the same tutelage, as different as night from day. Pious sons and daughters sprung from infidel and profligate parents; unredeemed and incorrigible rascals from honest and religious fathers; fools, that fritter away the vanishing hours they themselves scarcely know how, born where steady conduct and deep knowledge seemed the very life of those around them,—and earnest, intelligent, and energetic souls springing up, like palm-trees in the desert-sand, where never a thought has been given to mental culture or religious improvement."

. . . .

"There are persons who talk much and readily of their feelings, and who yet leave you in uncertainty both as to the sincerity and the motive of their confession; and there are others whose rare allusions to themselves and their private joys or sorrows seem to come like gleams of light, showing their whole inner nature."

. . . .

"I wonder if women who are 'first objects' in some large and happy home circle, —or even 'first objects' to the objects they themselves love,—ever ruminate over the condition of one who is *nobody's* first object. How lone in the midst of company such a one must feel! What silence must lie under all their talking and laughing! What strange disruption from the linked chain that holds all the rest together! What exile, though ever present! What starvation of soul, in the midst of all those great shares of love meted out around her!"

. . . .

"Woe to the man who is loved with the passion that has neither tenderness nor affection to soften it: who is loved not for his own sake, but for the selfish sake of the woman who has mated with him! The opposite of that love is hate. The serpent hatched from the Egyptian warmth of that sterile soil, is vengeance. Pity, and regret, and the sad quiet partings of a humbled heart; the unutterable and fiery sense of wrong quenched and conquered by a flood of better and holier feelings: all these things are unknown to such women. Their impulse is to slay Jason's children to punish Jason. They fulfil the Scriptural malediction which says, 'Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel.'"

We may, without violating the mystery of the story, reprint here one of its many pathetic and powerful scenes, because it meets us almost *in limine*, in the second chapter, and discloses nothing which the reader is not intended to know at the outset.

"Sir Douglas rode to Torrieburn almost as desperately as his brother had done the night before. He found the handsome rider he had fondly watched at his departure, a bruised, shattered, groaning wretch. His horse, overspurred, and bewildered by the drifting rain and howling storm, had swerved on the old-fashioned sharp-angled bridge that crossed the Falls of Torrieburn close to his home, and had dashed with his rider over the low parapet in among the rocks below.

"Close to home; luckily, close to home!

"Near enough for the wild shout he gave as he fell, and even the confused sound of the roll of shaken-down stones, and terrible weight of horse and rider falling on the bed of the torrent, to reach the house, and the quick ear of one who was waiting and watching there. For Kenneth's bachelor home was not a lonely one. Startling was the picture that presented itself in that drear morning's light when Sir Douglas entered. The weariest frightened form he ever beheld in the shape of woman, sat at the foot of the bed. Untidy, dishevelled, beautiful; her great white arms stretched out with clasped hands, shuddering every time that Kenneth groaned; her reddish-golden hair stealing in tangled locks from under the knotted kerchief, which she had never untied or taken off since she had rushed out into the storm and scrambled down to the Falls the night before. The lower part of her dress still soaked and dripping, covered with mud and moss—one of her loose stockings torn at the ankle, and the blood oozing through—her petticoat, too, torn on that side. She had evidently slipped in attempting to reach the horse and rider.

"Douglas spoke first to her, and he spoke to her of herself; not of his brother.

"'Och!' she said, and her teeth chattered as she spoke, 'ye'll no mind me, sir! it's naething. I just drappit by one hand frae the brae, in amang the stanes to get at him, and sae gat hurtit. Ou Kenneth! Kenneth! Kenneth! Ou my man! my ain man!' and rocking wildly to and fro while the rain beat against the window, and the storm seemed to rock the trees in unison with her movements, she ceased to speak.

" The dying man moved his lips with a strange sort of smile, but no sound came. Douglas knelt down by him; and, as he did so, was conscious of the presence of a little nestling child, the most lovely little face that ever looked out of a picture, that was sitting at the bed-head, serene and hopeful in all this trouble, and saying to him with a shy smile,—'Are ye the doctor? and will ye put daddy a' richt? We've been waiting lang for the doctor.'

" No doctor could save Kenneth—no, not if the aching heart of his elder brother had resolved to bring him life at the price of his whole estate. He was fast going—fast! The grief of the ungovernable woman at his bed-foot only vaguely disturbed him. He was beginning to be withdrawn from earthly sights and earthly sounds. But Sir Douglas tried to calm her. He besought her to be still; to go away and wash her wounded limb and tear-swoln face, and arrange herself, and return, and meanwhile he would watch Kenneth till the doctor came. No, she wouldn't—no, she couldn't—no, he might die while she was out of the way—no, she wad see the last o' him, and then dee.' She offered no help; she was capable of no comfort; she kept up her loud lament, so as to bewilder all present; and it was a positive relief to Sir Douglas when, with a sudden shiver through her whole frame, she slid from the bed-foot to the floor in a swoon."

The Doctor and his assistant arrive —" bone-setters," from the village of Torrieburn, and the admission soon comes, that beyond some trifling palliatives, their simple skill can devise nothing—Kenneth must die—

"When the doctor had arranged that dying bed for the best,—and had attended to the miserable woman who had fainted, and had brought her back, pale, exhausted, but quieter, to the sick chamber,—Kenneth made a feeble effort to raise himself; an exertion which was followed by a dreadful groan. Then he murmured twice the name of 'Maggie!—dear Maggie!' and Sir Douglas rose up, and made way for the trembling creature so called upon, to kneel down in his place: adjuring her, for the love of heaven—*for the love of Kenneth*—not to give way, but keep still; getting only from her a burst of sobbing, and the words, 'Kill me, och! kill me! and then maybe ye'll hush me down.' There seemed 'no hushing her down,' till suddenly Kenneth said, in a sort of dreamy voice, 'Maggie, you'll call to mind the birken trees—the birken trees!'

"The woman held her breath. There was no need to quiet her now.

"The birken trees by the broomy knowe, repeated he, dreamily; and in a low clear tone he added,—'I'm sorry, Maggie.'

"Then, opening his eyes with a fixed look, he said, 'Dear Douglas!' in a tone of extreme, almost boyish tenderness; and then followed a renewed silence: broken only by the wild gusty winds outside the house, and the distant sound of the fatal Falls of Torrieburn. All at once, with the rallying strength that sometimes precedes death, he spoke clearly and intelligibly. 'Douglas! be kind—I'm going—I'm dying—be kind to my Kenneth, for the sake of days when we were boys together! Don't forsake him! don't deny him! Have pity, too, on Maggie!'

" A little pause after that, and he spoke more restlessly:—'I'm asking others, and and I ought to do it myself. It's *I* who forsake them: it's I that didn't pity. I say—I say—are you all here? Douglas! the doctor—ah! yes, and my father's factor, —Well—I—'

" He struggled for a moment, with blue blanched lips; then, feeling for the little curled head of the child at the further side of his bed, and locking his right hand in the hand of the kneeling woman, he said,—'I trust Douglas with these. I declare Margaret Carmichael my WIFE, and I acknowledge Kenneth Carmichael Ross as my lawful son!'

" The woman gave a suppressed shriek; she sprang up from her knees, and flung her arms round the dying man with a wild, 'Och, I thank ye—I thank ye! and mither'll thank ye for ever! Ou! my Kenneth!'

"He turned his head towards her with that unutterable smile that often flits over dying faces. Brighter and fonder his smile could not have been in the days of their first love: 'by the broomy knowe, under the birken trees;' and perhaps his thoughts were there, even in that supreme hour. No other word, except a broken ejaculation of prayer, came from him; only the bystanders 'saw a great change'—the change there is no describing—come over his brow. The anguish of mortal pain seemed to melt into peace. A great sigh escaped him, such as bursts from the bosom in some sudden relief from suffering, and the handsome man was a handsome corpse.

"HE who had been so much to that wailing woman, had become IT! 'it;' 'the body;' that perishable form which had clothed the eternal soul, and was now to be carried away and hidden under the earth, 'to suffer corruption,' and join the unseen throng of those whose place in this world 'shall know them no more.' "

Maggie is drawn with the daring skill and utter fidelity which characterize every picture in old Sir Douglas —a skill and a fidelity which remind one of the homely literalities which in Hogarth's and in Shakespeare's pictures startle one with their undeniable reality, and render the sublime of tragedy more sublime by a touch of prosaic and vulgar nature. In this sort of contrast Mrs. Norton is a consummate artist; nothing is disguised of Maggie's coarseness, violence, and vulgarities; she receives the benefit neither of distance, nor of darkened windows; she is in nowise idealized, nor translated into a statue; we see her in the broadest daylight, and face to face, without having been spared one intonation of her Scottish brogue, and savage uproar, or a single aggravation of her fierceness, and grossness, and vulgar savagery; and yet with all this—and in great measure—such is the mystery of true art, *because* of this, Maggie is nearly always interesting, and often by reason of the wild burst and tempest of her ungoverned affections, positively sublime—Maggie alone would make the success and the interest of a good novel; and yet, such is the wealth and perfection of portraiture—especially of female portraiture—in these pages, that Maggie might very easily lose her legitimate prominence among the creations of fiction, by her juxtaposition with the other more strange and striking, though not more finished pictures, in these powerful volumes.

The most singular figure that rises before us, at the weird beck of Mrs. Norton's pen, and that which, with strangest fascination, haunts our eyes, days after her book is shut—is undoubtedly that of Alice Ross. In the earlier chapters of the tale we become acquainted with her as a child, cold, cautious, repellant, and yet with a certain silent prettiness and grace. This little girl, the half-sister of old Sir Douglas, is harboured by him, after her mother's death, at his Highland castle of Glenrossie, of which she becomes "the lady," and in due time does the honors for him; this position, however, is changed—Sir Douglas brings home a beautiful young wife, and the first home-transports of the bride, are succeeded by a faint sense of danger—a trouble thus described—

"And then, very slowly, very quietly, very unexpectedly, and yet very clearly, she awoke to the perception that in her Paradise there was a snake.

"Not a creature that awed and yet fascinated; whose presence was a mystery, and its counsel almost a scornful command. But a little sliding, slithering, mean, small snake: a 'snake in the grass:' a snake whose tiny bite the heel might almost carelessly spurn when it seemed to pursue, and whose power to wound might be doubted and smiled over, till the miracle of death by its venom were irrevocably proved! A snake that looked like a harmless eft.

"Nothing but the instinctive repulsion which exists in certain natures to reptiles even when unseen, their presence being discoverable to the inner soul of feeling though not to the outward sense, could have inspired Gertrude with the aversion she gradually felt for Sir Douglas's half-sister, Alice Ross.

"Alice had not offended the bride; on the contrary she flattered her; she obviously endeavoured to please, to wind round her, to become necessary to her. She went beyond the mere yielding up gracefully the small delegated authority which for many years she had seemed to exercise, from being 'the only one of the family resident at the Castle.' She was not satisfied with dropping to the condition of friend and equal; she rather assumed that of poor relation and humble companion. She chose toleration, and repudiated welcome. As to the near connexion between herself and Sir Douglas, she always alluded to it in a humble, half-mournful, apologetic manner, as if it were a fault, but not *her* fault; and yet a fault for which she was willing to make amends to the extent of her feeble powers. She behaved towards him as towards one who was to be admired, reverenced, wondered at;—but to *love* him would be taking too great a liberty. Still, in her own subservient way she contrived to impress him with a notion of humble worship: and she lost no opportunity of increasing that impression even while she deprecated all evidences of its ruling spirit in her mind."

We know not whether this picture has its particular counterpart in life. We cannot recollect, however, having actually met its original. And yet with the mysterious recognition we sometimes experience in dreams, we know Alice Ross instantly.

"Alice was certainly what in common parlance is called, even when the party still retains claims to personal attraction, 'an old maid.'

"Alice *did* retain claims to personal attraction: her well-shaped head,—though its banded hair was of that disagreeable dry drab colour, which had not yet the advantage of our modern fashion of being dyed of a golden red,—surmounted a long, slender white throat; and a figure which, if somewhat too spare for artistic notions of beauty, was, as her maid expressed it, 'jimp and genteel.'

"She moved (as she spoke) with slow precision; and not without some degree of grace. The only positively disagreeable thing about her, was a certain watchfulness which disturbed and fascinated you. Do what you would, Alice's eyes were on you. You felt them fixed on your shoulder; your forehead; the back of your head; your hands; your feet; the sheet of paper on which you were writing a letter; the title and outside cover of the book you were reading; the harmless list you were making out of your day's shopping; the anxious calculation of your year's income; and the little vague sketch you scribbled while your mind was occupied about other things.

"I have spoken of her as the snake in this Paradise; but there was something essentially *feline*, also, in her whole manner; and indeed the cat is, among inferior animals, what the snake is among a lower order of creatures. The noiseless, cautious, circuitous mode in which she made her way across a room was cat-like; the dazed quiet of her eyes on common occasions, had the expression of a cat sitting in the sun; and the startling illumination of watchful attention in them at other times, recalled to our fancy the same creature catching sight of its prey. Even the low purring, and rubbing of pussy's soft fur against your side, seemed to find its analogy in her slow soft words of flattery: as the gentle approach, which neither required nor even accepted any returning caress, resembled the gliding to and fro on some familiar hearth of that unloving little domestic animal, whose cry is alien and weird to our ears, and its shape like a diminished tiger.

"Above all, in her gravity and changelessness, she was cat-like."

"In all that touched *herself*, she was keen, far-sighted, and long-remembering. She never forgot an injury. She never omitted an opportunity.

"Her cat-like resemblance extended to the order and method of her every-day life. In the open daylight of social intercourse, she was tranquil and unobtrusive, or purring and courteous; but in the darkness of solitary hours—in the Lone Den—her mind prowled and capered, and took its light leaps in pursuit of prey. There, the dazed eyes resumed their brilliant watchfulness; and gleamed over the gloom of her destiny. There, the many calculations for small and great ends were methodically arranged, and plans laid for besieging, undermining, and beleaguering, such as find no place in military books. The tactics of Elian were nothing in comparison with the tactics of Alice."

We have hitherto seen this feline creature in her normal state of apathy and vigilance. For one moment let us look at her, in the solitude of her room, agitated by the wild—almost insane passion of which her seemingly cold nature is capable.

"He was gone forth; gone forth from *her*,—even she scarce knew where, or for how long,—but gone—gone out into the temptation of pleasing and being pleased elsewhere; and when Alice thought of it, that pale and apparently passionless woman could have dashed her head against the stone embrasure of her turret-window, or thrown herself from it into the deep courtyard below. Anything to still the fierce beating of blood to and fro in her brain, and deaden the thoughts that chased each other there, of the dark-eyed, meagre, eloquent man, who had been mocking Heaven and his fellow-creatures by the assumption of a character as much acted as any on the stage!

"But Alice governed herself, and was outwardly calm. The fox of an evil secret gnawing at her heart should not find her less brave than the Spartan. If she gave way she might destroy him,—she might *hang him*,—those were his words: no matter what they meant: no matter what he was. She would bear,—and live,—and see him again; and rend in pieces anyone who attempted to thwart her, or rival her in his affections."

It is quite impossible with the aid of a few tesselated extracts, to reproduce the spell which Mrs. Norton's art gradually and patiently weaves about us, and around this singular creation, in whom we discover, along with so much that is mean, bloodless, cruel—a sinister charm, for which we cannot account, except by a sort of witchcraft—and after whom, even when we have ceased to hope, in her, for one secret point of human sympathy, unless we are to except such passion as a sorceress is imagined sometimes to cherish for a human object, we yet linger with a perverted fascination.

In this feminine gallery we are irresistibly arrested by another portrait—gaunt, repulsive—with whose general effect we are familiar; but with the hard lines, minute wrinkles, and undefinable singularities of expression which indicate an unquestionable individuality. It is the full-length figure of the Countess of Clochnaben.

"The Countess of Clochnaben was standing with her hands behind her, superintending the planting of some trees, when Alice alighted from her pony.

"She was so tall, and stood so firmly, that you might think she herself had been planted in the ground; and so thoroughly well planted, that no storm would avail to uproot her. She had been in youth what is termed a 'fine woman,'—very stately; but the worst of immeasurably stately women is, that in old age they are apt to become gaunt. The Countess of Clochnaben *had* become gaunt. She was also very severe in her opinion of others; gaunt in mind as well as body. She kept very early hours. The iron vibration of the rusty old clock in the courtyard, very seldom had the advantage of her in getting the hours of six in summer and seven in winter struck fairly through, before her stern tread was heard on the outer staircase. These morning hours being often chill, and the gusty mountain-gaps full of what Shakspeare calls 'an eager and a nipping air,' she habitually wore over her cap, as a shield against rheumatic headache, a small quilted black silk bonnet; and when she headed her breakfast-table, what with this peculiarity of costume, the rigid and erect carriage of her tall body, and the prepared severity of her mouth, she looked like a venerable judge about to pass sentence on a criminal.

"And, indeed, she was continually passing sentence on criminals. Most of her neighbours and connexions were criminals in her eyes; and she spent her time in reviewing their conduct with much asperity."

For sake of the *naïve* terms in which it is conveyed, we must here permit the Countess to utter one of her characteristic *dicta*—as she liked to term the emphatic expressions of her opinion.

"'You should not encourage such doings at Glenrossie,' said the dowager severely; 'there never was mirth or singing since *I* can remember the place, on such an improper day as the Lord's-day.'"

From this Rhembrant we turn to a portrait, young, refined, and voluptuous. The Spanish bride of young Kenneth Ross arrives as the guest of "old Sir Douglas and Lady Ross, at their beautiful Scottish castle."

"When Dona Eusebia did at last appear, they saw a most undeniable beauty; though she looked (as, indeed, she was) some years older than Kenneth. What with the splendour of a rich complexion, made richer by the addition of rouge; the glossiness of hair made glossier with strongly scented oils; the deep crimson of the carnations twisted with black lace, on her head; the gems that glittered on her neck; the sudden turn and flashing of her glorious black eyes, and the equally sudden flirting and shutting of a painted fan mounted in mother-of-pearl and gold, the motion of which was so incessant that it seemed an integral portion of her living self; what with the gleaming smile when the curled lips parted and left her white teeth, like waves in the sunshine disclosing a shell; what with the pretty trick she had, at the end of every laugh (and she laughed often), of giving a mischievous bite to the full underlip, as though to punish it back to gravity; and what with the fling and leap of the soft fringes on her robe when she turned with quick animation to answer you,—there was so much lustre and movement about her, that it seemed as if she were a fire-fly transformed by magic into a woman. And, if she stood still (as she very seldom did), the curve of her neck and back resembled some beautiful scroll-work in sculpture; while her tiny forward foot shone in its satin shoe, a separate miracle,—for you wondered how anything so small could have so much strength and majesty in it."

Very happy and brilliant is Mrs. Norton's sketch of the London triumphs of this foreign beauty :—

"If ever that Tantalus thirst, the love of admiration, *could* be satisfied, certainly it should have been in the exceptional case of Dona Eusebia's triumphal progress through the London season. She 'made *furore*,' as the foreign phrase terms it. A hundred *lorgnons* were aimed at her sparkling face as she leaned from her opera-box, her graceful arms half nestled in scarlet and gold shawls, or Moorish bournouses of white and gold, black and gold, purple and gold, as the fancy of the evening moved her; for Eusebia had as many shawls and gowns as our vestal and over-rated Queen Elizabeth.

"She laid her dresses and wreaths out in the morning on her bed, and studied what the evening should bring forth. She tried on her jewels at the glass, and rehearsed the performances of her *coiffeur*. She tossed a white blonde mantilla over her glossy head, and stuck orange blossoms under the comb, and tossed it off again, to replace it with heavy black lace and a yellow rose. She sate mute and motionless, contemplating her own little satin shoes with big rosettes to them, and then sprang up and assaulted that bewitching *chaussure;* pulling off the rosettes, and putting in glittering buckles; relapsing thereafter into the mute idolatry of contemplation. She wore her jet black hair one day so smoothly braided that her head looked as if carved in black marble, and the next it was all loose, and wayward, and straying about, as if she had been woke out of a restless slumber, and carried off to a party without having had time allowed her to comb it through.

"All the London dandies,—half the grave politicians,—a quarter of the philosophic sages,—and a very large proportion of the

> Established Church, both High and Low,—thought, spoke, and occupied themselves, chiefly with reference to the fact of the appearance of this Star of Granada. The pine-apples and flowers of every great country-house, and the time of the masters of such houses, were at her entire disposal. It was rather a favour conferred than received, when she consented to accept a peer's ticket for some state show, or the opening ceremonies of Parliament. Statesmen sat round her after the cabinet was over; and indeed in some cases were even suspected of hurrying the happy moment of their release from such duties, in order to be in time to ride with her in the Park. Bishops wrote her facetious and kindly little notes. Poets extolled her charms in every measure possible in the English language, including the doubtful possibility of hexameters. Beautiful fresh young girls were presented at Court and made their *débût* in the world of fashion, and the greatest compliment that could be paid to the mothers of such as were brunettes was to say that 'about the eyes,' or 'cheek,' or 'chin,' or 'mouth,' or *tout ensemble*, they had 'a look' of Dona Eusebia."

In the twining of this powerful tale are many strands of interest. One of these is anxious and even provoking. It results from a reserve in which the sort of cowardice which prefers a perilous silence to a frank but somewhat ambiguous disclosure, carries the person, Lady Ross, in whose happiness we actually feel, and are intended to feel, a degree of interest amounting almost to pain, to the verge of a ruinous self-sacrifice. Extreme frankness is often the expression of the merest callosity; reserve, on the other hand, is more frequently a form of sensitiveness than of suspicion. Gertrude Ross is eminently sensitive and unselfish; an instinctive horror of giving pain leads her to consider the feelings of others, even the unworthiest and the most unkindly, in preference to her own happiness and even safety. We find her gratuitously keeping the very questionable secrets of unamiable and unscrupulous persons, one of whom at least has evinced an active desire to injure her. These secrets have come to her without the complication of any confidence on the part of the odious people whom they concern, and in keeping which from her husband—a frank, trusting, and tender gentleman, whom she loves almost idolatrously—she compromises her own reputation, and of necessity his happiness. That such things do happen now and then is only too true. But we have little patience with the feminine folly and secrecy which drop, here and there, bit by bit, the materials of a constructive case, which secret enemies and interested intriguers may put together at their leisure against the fair fame and the peace of a happy home. While in this one instance, pregnant with calamitous results, we complain of the heroine's indecision and even folly, we are bound to remark that Gertrude Ross is no conventional lady after the pink and white waxwork model. We have the distinctest possible idea of her in person, tastes, character, and style. She takes her place in the story as thoroughly invidualized in her way as the hardest or wickedest person of the drama; and it is exactly because we feel that we have seen and known her, that we are so nervously interested in her happiness, and so incensed at her own temporary mismanagement of it.

Mrs. Norton's novel is glowing from first to last with colour. The ease and rapidity with which she *describes*, are magical. Natural scenery she paints with the touch, not of an artist, but of an enchanter. Her process is a mystery. We witness no exertion and need no patience. Trees, mountains, rocks, and skies expand before us in the glory and harmony of their hues and outlines. In like manner, whatever other object—be it peculiar figure, elaborate costume; face, dismal and wicked, or pure and lovely, she chooses you to see—you do see, and remember afterward, not as a dream but a reality that has traced itself in your brain. To this rare power of description Mrs. Norton adds the still rarer gift of translating the spirit and poetry of that which she makes you see into expression; and not only have we this never-ending play of fancy, but the charm of an intellectual activity, which at every second page hints a thought, or invites discussion, or investigates the moral of her situations, or the mysteries of human nature, with a facile and profound penetration. This stream of original thought sparkling through the entire work, stimulates in the reader a corresponding mental activity, and is one of the chief delights which await an acquaintance with this extraordinary novel.

We have observed a careful reticence respecting the plot and denouement of the story. As we have before hinted, there are several—indeed, no less than three—principal and distinct veins of interest in the book. That which concerns Alice Ross and James Frere is heightened by the mystery which, skilfully managed, so powerfully contributes to the exciting ingredient of romantic fiction. It is enough to say of the plan of this story that it owes nothing to the received precedents of fiction. The symmetry of a well-knit plot is disguised by a treatment which makes the whole story, with a gathering impetus, flow to its conclusion, so like a piece of real life, that we are cheated into discussing its incidents and persons like actual griefs and real men and women. Slight as has been this notice, we have placed, we believe, sufficient matter in evidence to satisfy our readers that we were right in pronouncing "Old Sir Douglas," Mrs. Norton's unquestionably greatest prose work.